

THE COVERT PRESENCE

Alice G. Guillermo



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**THE COVERT PRESENCE
and Other Essays
On Politics and Culture**

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**Maipagmamalaki
Gawang Pilipino**

**Para kay Gelacio, Sofia, at Ramon
at sa mga kaibigan**

PREFACE

All of these essays and journalistic pieces were done after the February 1986 uprising, except for the article on culture and ideology which was slightly updated and extended to the present. Their political and cultural climate is that of the Aquino government which carries over much from the Marcos regime, at the same time that it has, in two years, defined a character of its own, shaped by internal and external pressures.

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PHILIPPINE CULTURE: IDEOLOGY AND TRANSFORMATION

Culture, while it is commonly invoked as the privileged realm of the national heritage and traditions, of our identity as a people expressed in customs, mores, and artistic forms, is, in fact, no less important a force in maintaining or changing a social order. It is often the site of ideological mystification: the exalted concept of culture as the repository of a people's cherished beliefs, values, and practices in art, religion, education, and general lifestyle so easily obscures the reality of its economic, as well as political, determinations. Culture, then, is not a neutral and autonomous realm from which we draw moral and aesthetic edification and solace. For while it is indeed a rich source of knowledge and emotional satisfaction with its confirmation of a common identity, it is nevertheless true that it is also an active and highly contested terrain in which take place the ideological battles corresponding to the conflicts, dissensions, and schisms at the material base.

During the Marcos regime, we were daily witness to the brazen manipulation, appropriation, and misuse of cultural forms by the dictatorship, and today, by the Aquino ruling elite, in order to legitimize and perpetuate their power. At the same time, we have seen the emergence of a national and democratic culture that both exposes the ideological deceptions of the dominant class and creates from new premises based on the people's interests.

To state a basic premise, culture, as part of the superstructure, can only be fully understood when viewed in relation to the material base of society. For the superstructure, while it is relatively autonomous in its political and ideological levels, is determined by the economic in the last instance. Not to be overlooked, however, is the fact that the material base includes, aside from the economic, other factors such as the social and geographic, the psychological, and the ethnic. Moreover, the relationship of base and superstructure is not linear nor unidirectional and mechanical from base to superstructure, but reciprocal, interpenetrating, and dialectical. At times, the relationship is readily apparent, as when a cultural form, such as nineteenth century portraiture, illustrates the assertion of new economic forces: at other times, the relationship is indirect and seemingly remote because of the complex operation of various determinations, political and ideological over the economic. In maintaining the determination by the economic in the last instance, Gregor McLennan provides the insightful explanation that "it is gratuitous simply to define 'determinism' as necessarily reductive. It is simply not the case that x 's being determined by y deprives x of causal status in its own right, including the propensity to substantially affect the determining conditions" (McLennan, 1981). From this it is possible to affirm that culture, in its various forms, reflects the contending forces of society, at the same time that it effects change on the material base. Furthermore, the base/superstructure model is not limited to a static formulation, since it enters into the movement of the historical process.

Feudal Ideology in Culture

The view of culture as an arena of ideological struggle can alone provide the critical perception necessary to discern and analyze the strategies in the superstructure. The prevailing feudal, colonial, and comprador-bourgeois ideology serves to reproduce the existing semifeudal/semicolonial mode.

The strong feudal element in Philippine culture is the product of a long historical process beginning with the nascent feudalism of precolonial times and continuing into the colonial context with Spanish occupation and the division of the land into *encomiendas*, friar estates, and haciendas. The feudal ideology reflects the interests of the landowning class, both colonial and indigenous, which enjoyed traditional privilege in the highly inequitable system of land ownership.

Colonial feudalism in the country, like classical feudalism in Europe, particularly in Spain, greatly depended on religion to provide the moral coercion needed to perpetuate ownership rights to the land. Religion was used by the State as a tool to maintain the exploitative relations of the feudal system. Local conditions echoed those prevailing in feudal Spain. The rule of Spain, which was the most conservative in Europe, was marked by the unity of Church and State, as symbolized by the personages of *Los Reyes Catolicos*. In the sixteenth century, when Spain was still flushed with success at the *Reconquista*, it would erect on its soil the most severe form of the Inquisition which exemplified the ruthless use of religion by the State to preserve property relations and privilege.

In this context, it is not surprising that for centuries our colonial religious imagery has been replete with monarchic elements and symbols: Christ as King with complete royal iconography, Mary as Queen with all her images ceremonially crowned, the Santo Niño also with crown, purple cape, sceptre, and globe signifying universal dominion. Bejewelled royal opulence has characterized most of our religious

images. Beyond mere visual phenomenon, this quality of spectacle bore a latent political conditioning: it served to instill awe in the masses and at the same time evoke romantic fantasies of royal splendor in the physical absence of the Spanish monarch in the colonies. And yet, holy figures invested with worldly rank and magnificence reflected only one side of an ideological conflict within the medieval Church between the wealthy popes and the reform orders who preached poverty and the renunciation of worldly goods.

State religion effected the superimposition of the Spanish monarch with his deputy, the governor-general in the colony, and Christ the King, Mary the Queen, with a foot stepping on the serpent, the enemy, who had variously taken the forms of the Moor and the Jew, economically aggressive outsiders who posed serious challenges to the property rights of the ruling class. Even more, religious imagery in royal garb instilled in the colonized native population the consciousness of being subjects of masters who were representatives of the King who, in turn, was the earthly image of God himself. The masses were subjects in a political hierarchy beginning at the base with the immediate local officials and culminating at the apex with the absent King of Spain whose remote and inaccessible splendor was a reflection of divine power.

This condition of subjects several times removed and alienated from the center of political authority was replicated in such cultural forms as the *awit* and the *corrido* which for the Filipino masses were romances of the exploits of kings and queens, princes and princesses in imaginary kingdoms outside and beyond empirical reality. The many-levelled hierarchic structure within a colonial system cowed the masses into passive submission especially since it was advanced as a condition of divine fiat. It was only in the mid-nineteenth century which saw economic change with the opening of the country to international trade and the subsequent emergence of the native middle class that political power became a goal and accessible reality.

As the dominant ideological state apparatus in the Spanish

Colonial Period, religion absorbed the functions of education and the institution of the family. The friars assumed the task of providing a rudimentary education consisting of basic literacy and rote learning of the catechism and prayers. Religion also restructured the native *baranganic* family into the feudal/colonial context. When the *barangay* as kinship group entered into the feudal system, the figure of the ruling patriarch was transformed into that of the friar or colonial official within the hierarchic order. In the paternalistic ethic of the period, the friar as immediate colonial administrator assumed the role of father-patriarch vis-a-vis the natives who assumed the status of children expected to submit dutifully. This ideology which likened the entire society to a family in which the ruler was the father and the people the children implied an unchanging eternal order in which everyone was assigned his fixed and designated place.

The institution of the family assumed a rigid and elaborate structure in the feudal/colonial system which extended the *baranganic* family and subsumed it under the institutional Church. To the original family was added the appendages of the *padrinos* and *compadres*, the *ninongs* and *ninangs* of baptism, confirmation, and marriage which institutionalized feudal and patronage relations of lifelong loyalty and protection, a condition rife with far-reaching political implications. The centrality of the family likewise operates in the choice of leaders in government and in the different social relationships with the effect of placing personalities over issues.

Feudalism with its patriarchal-paternalistic principle also institutionalized gender oppression in assigning to woman a passive and secondary role and depriving her of opportunities for self-development and social leadership. This was because, in the hierarchic feudal framework, woman was reduced to the status of mere chattel, piece of property or domestic ornament owned by man and destined by nature to serve him — a condition of servitude aggravated by the colonial system itself. For woman was not only subject to

man but became doubly subject as native woman to white colonial master. This sex discrimination gave rise to the machismo ideology of male domination with its fixed gender roles prejudicial to women and its double standard of morality. The oppression of woman was a specific area in which the exploitative feudal order ensured its perpetuation.

Since, in the feudal mode, the perpetuation of privilege does not require the plowing back of surplus in terms of rent, share, profit into the means of production, culture as conveyor of ideology is mobilized for the function of preserving property relations. Thus, the reproduction of the feudal mode requires the elaboration of a complex and comprehensive ideological superstructure with its institutional apparatuses. The preservation of traditional privilege in terms of property rights necessitates maintaining the condition of ideological mystification. As we have seen, this was primarily accomplished through a colonial state religion which blended monarchic pomp and a paternalistic ethic.

One characteristic of feudalism is that it abets the wasteful utilization of surplus and its extravagant display. This is due to the fact that extraeconomic factors such as political position or connection to the seat of power plus the mobilization of ideological forms effectively function to secure traditional privilege. Wasteful consumption is likewise an assertion of economic power and class position.

As the feudal mode releases a significant surplus, a considerable portion of it is channeled to cultural expressions. A striking example of the conversion of feudal surplus into culture is seen in the mid-nineteenth century when the landlords who benefitted from cash crop agriculture created a rich secular culture with their patronage. The period, which saw the beginning of mercantilism, was marked by an intensified activity in house-building and related arts such as woodcarving and furniture-making, as well as oil painting and music with the acquisition of Western musical instruments. The underlying economic impulse is clearly visible in the fashionable portraits which celebrated new prosperity of the *ilustrado* class in images recording

the refinements of material culture and delineating an urbane ideal of manners meant to serve as exemplar for all future generations.

It was in the surplus in the feudal mode which gave rise to the tradition of the *fiesta* and the multiplicity of artistic expressions associated with it. In its pristine form the *fiesta* was the occasion of lavish public display in food, spectacles of folk theater, and the many colorful forms of folk art. These manifestations are part of feudal culture in the sense that they reflect the agricultural and land-based mode. They constitute the artistic expression of the peasant masses and thus show affinities with the productions of peasant communities in other parts of the world. Most of the indigenous arts and crafts are linked to agriculture and to other rural occupations such as fishing and hunting. Likewise, the off-season in the agricultural cycle provides ample time for the traditional production of basketry, pottery, weaving, wood-carving, etc. But while the folk arts reflect the feudal mode, and, to some extent, the patronage of the landlord class, they do not in themselves necessarily bear an ideological content which reproduces and perpetuates the feudal exploitative relations.

What these arts commonly share is the character of folk creativity operating on a technological level dependent on manual skill and reflecting indigenous aesthetic values. Rooted as they are in material production and in social religious ritual, they bear a strong communal stamp. It is because of their indigenous grassroots identity as popular traditions that the arts, whether as visual artifact, song, drama, or poetry, have become a highly contested ground between the State and the progressive forces in the realization of the necessity of articulating the popular culture into the hegemonic discourse as evidence of its mass character.

The Use of Feudal Ideology

We have noted the unabashed use and manipulation of religion by the State and by conservative or reactionary

forces to perpetuate their power. The ruling elite has always found it most profitable to manipulate religion because it contains traditional and powerful moral sanctions which can be maneuvered to coincide with its interests.

The Marcos dictatorship, in collusion with the reactionary elements in the Church active to the present, exploited the most backward and medieval aspects of Catholicism. Official tourism sponsored processions of images of the Santo Niño rivalling one another in royal finery and of the Virgin in her different coronations. This is a throwback to the medieval Church when the pomp and circumstance of the Catholic Kings was a reflection of divine power itself. It was a strategy aimed to condition the minds of the oppressed masses to be receptive to monarchy in a new guise and to accept as inscribed in the order of things the royal posturings of the ruling Marcos family whose dress code in portraits signified royal status. Even more, it is an insidious strategy to erode the people's sense of democracy and to rigidify class positions as never before.

In general, the Marcos regime tried at all costs to make religion in whatever form serve its interests. Even up to now, reactionary carry-overs from the Marcos period with the help of the conservative clergy have fully exploited President Aquino's personal religiosity to defend and secure their interests. We have also seen an unprecedented stream of American evangelists of the most reactionary stripe come to preach their brands of hard-sell religion *cum* hocus-pocus on the masses. Never before have we witnessed such a proliferation of religious groups, including the Charismatics, the Born Again, and the Opus Dei with a renewed religious militancy, or the rampant interest and susceptibility to "miracles" such as crying Madonnas and dancing Santo Niños accorded valuable media space. Tensions are also created between religious denominations by the attempt to play them against one another in terms of political favor. In the extreme, any religion, including the Maharishi, could well serve their purpose, especially in the crucial function of controlling education and making the studentry a captive

generation of uncritical automatons for a docile and exportable manpower. Meanwhile, in the countryside, the rural populations continue to suffer from the depredations of state-armed religious fanatics with their reactionary ideology fueled by the lethal combination of ignorance and firepower.

State interventions in religion which exploit emotional, irrational, and mystical aspects primarily function at present to counteract the spread among the people of liberation theology which the conservatives have denounced and tried to suppress. The reason for their virulent attack is that liberation theology and the theology of struggle with their option for the poor generally accentuates the antagonism between the people and the power bloc and effects a fusion of religion and national-democratic aspirations, thus opening into a revolutionary perspective. Likewise, the theology of liberation or struggle disarticulates religion, a strong traditional influence on the lives of the people, from the ideological discourse of the dominant class and rearticulates it into a new and liberating discourse. To this, the counterstrategy of the conservative State is to effect a categorical separation between the interpellation of "citizen" and that of "priest" or "religious" and to prevent the fusion of these two in one subject. In the face of these machinations in religion, the valiant struggle of the progressive elements of the Philippine clergy is indeed worthy of admiration.

The State ideology also draws extensively from the patriarchal values of the feudal ethic which implies the benevolence and the compassion of the dominant class. It has mobilized the family as an ideological state apparatus. The dictatorship disguised itself in the feudal paternalistic role of administering the affairs of the people who are "brought into line" by martial rule and reduced to the status of minors and subjects. Through the traditional Filipino values of the family, it sought to legitimize dynastic ambitions. Likewise, the State with its appeal to the strong Filipino sense of family describes the revolution as mere fratricidal strife and obscures underlying social contradictions.

In the area of indigenous and folk culture, the Marcos regime approached the field like a supermarket where it appropriated the most attractive and usable items for its consumption. We recall how it made use of the Maranaw cultural symbol of the *sari-manok* as the logo of an international beauty contest. The Marcos regime distorted folk myths, such as *Malakas at Maganda* and *Maria Makiling* and gave them unwelcome faces. It commissioned bogus epics that began by invoking the ancient native deities and ended with a paean to the New Society. Folk and ethnic cultural expressions were commandeered and exploited by tourism as good copy in projecting a colorful and "exotic" image abroad while masking the harsh realities.

Colonial and Comprador Bourgeois Ideology in Culture

Aside from the feudal, Philippine culture also reflects neocolonial relations. The neocolonial character of the dominant ruling class culture was maintained at the economic level by the subservience of the Marcos regime to American capitalist interests. The present economy is still marked by the domination of foreign monopoly capital through the IMF-World Bank with its dictates and the international corporations which undermine local initiative and cripple national industrialization. This condition has guaranteed a massive and steady influx of cultural importations which condition the minds of the people to accept the system as a matter of course.

Both the Spanish and American colonizations had the effect of displacing our identity as a particular Asian people in order to give way to a valuation of the white colonizer possessing coercive power and wealth. In colonization, the changes and developments at the ideological level through which the population gradually assumes and absorbs the values of the colonizer only disguise the underlying economic motive of colonization. To the upholding of the world view, values, aesthetics, and lifestyles of the colonizers

corresponds the downgrading of indigenous culture, and creativity. This displacement of our identity on all levels including the cultural has resulted in a grievous and chronic malaise, a sense of lack and of alienation from our own resources.

While the American colonial regime lasted for a mere fifty years in comparison to the Spanish occupation of four centuries, it left profound effects which guaranteed the ensuing neocolonial relationship because American colonial rule actively operated at the ideological level through its institution of the public school system, the state university and other academic branches, as well as in textbooks and publications. The reality of American colonial domination and exploitation was couched in the rosy myth of "Benevolent Assimilation." After independence, the neocolonial relationship guaranteed by parity rights and the presence of the American military bases was explained in terms of "special relations." The *pensionado* program and scholarship grants sponsored by American big business developed a compliant government bureaucracy and ensured the continuing domination of foreign monopoly capital through the ruling US-trained elite. The Magsaysay regime in the Fifties cultivated the "common *tao*" ideology which substituted a populism of form and gesture stage-managed by the CIA for a genuine populism based on the interests of the peasants and workers.

The neocolonial condition of the country spawned a bureaucrat and crony capitalism in which privilege is determined and perpetuated not so much by the developmental process of capital accumulation in industry as by the comprador's extraeconomic and political connections to the State as the agent and facilitator of monopoly capital. Correspondingly, the cultural program of the State created an ideological framework placing premium on foreign cultural productions to the detriment of our own. This was particularly obvious in the programs of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, then the showpiece of Imelda Marcos, especially in its better-funded days, which promoted the

colonial mentality in culture by the extravagant promotion of foreign artists and performing groups to the disadvantage of our local talents, aside from the massive dollar drain entailed by such elitist prestige projects.

State programs perpetuated the impression that culture as "High Art" is to be sought elsewhere and not to be found in our midst, and that therefore the model is for the artist to ignore his immediate reality and train his sights abroad to the "post-modern" dictates of New York. The aggressive presence of foreign monopoly capital in culture is visible as never before in the serial novels which proffer vapid romances and soft porn, the pseudoscience books which flood the bookstalls, the American top hits on the airwaves, or the mushrooming food chains that ease out our indigenous cuisine. But it is primarily the mass radio-and-TV media which perpetuate a condition of cultural alienation.

All this, however, does not imply the mechanical identification of the colonial with the foreign and the consequent rejection of all foreign influence. What is to be rejected is the condition in which the State perpetuates the colonial mentality in culture in order to preserve the neocolonial relationship in economics and politics. It is likewise important to be keenly aware and critical of the various forms of ideological mystification which reproduce the domination of foreign monopoly capital and the continued exploitation of the Filipino masses in the system. On the other hand, positive foreign influence lies in the area of technological transfer whenever feasible and which may serve to increase production and enhance communications. Also valuable are progressive and antiimperialist trends abroad in areas such as contemporary criticism. It is likewise well to recognize the enlarging international network of solidarity in which perspective the Filipino people's struggle is not isolated but part of a larger unity, as we learn from the experiences of the national liberation movements in other parts of the world, particularly in Latin America.

Because of the firm tie-up of the comprador capitalist component in our economy with foreign monopoly capital,

the bourgeois aspect of Philippine culture has a distinct colonial cast. But while the colonial aspect of the dominant culture is large in scope, the bourgeois-comprador ideology is more perceptible in Manila and other urban centers of the country. Its influence is strongest at the tertiary level of the educational system because of the predominantly elitist and colonial orientation of education.

Like the feudal, the bourgeois-comprador ideology has perpetuated the concept of culture as elitist, the privilege of the dominant classes and to be maintained as such. It created the ideological distinction between "High Art" and "Low Art" with the rigid categories of the fine arts and the applied arts. The fine arts are those which are "contemplated for their own sake," implying a condition of economic ease and leisure for their appreciation in contradistinction to the applied arts which are linked to practical use and are therefore "impure" following the ideological premise that art is autonomous and unrelated to practical function at its best. The concept of art as apolitical and nonpartisan or "art for art's sake" is one which effectively conceals the ideological content of art in which it espouses, directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly, particular class interests. This concealment of the economic determinations of culture ensures a condition of passive and uncritical receptivity on the part of the public as consumer of the cultural object.

The elitist distinction between "High Art" and "Low Art" derives from the European Academy, a cultural apparatus integrated into the royal courts to surround the monarch with splendor and provide the ruling class with a variety of sophisticated diversionary fare. Its hierarchies of subject matter and medium that became imbedded in academic convention served to reproduce in artistic practice the hierarchies of class society as in the natural order of things.

The Western classical tradition which left its influence on our urban culture created a privileged realm for art situated above eye level, literally and metaphorically, or upon a pedestal detached from human struggle and strife. Part of this tradition is the foregrounding of the notion of art

as finished artifact with the related concealment of its process and material production, a strategy to maintain the aura and mystique of art which reveals itself to a select circle of initiates. In this lies the insistence on the distinct categorization of art and craft, since the latter clearly bears the stamp of manual labor and skill which thus associates it with work and the laboring masses. In this context, the practice of art was either directly done under the patronage of the ruling class or pursued as a mark of personal refinement and distinction. Thus, when the turn-of-the-century political militancy expressed in nationalistic plays settled down in the 1920s and '30s, the practice of art, such as painting and poetry, narrowed down to signify the personal cultivation and connoisseurship that were part of the definition of the gentleman *ilustrado*. As such, it dwelt mainly on concerns of craft, divorced from the realities and issues of the time, or, at best, nurtured a romantic nativism.

Indeed, an essential part of bourgeois mystification is the concept of culture as ahistorical in denying its perspectival character and as universalist in overlooking its specificities of social milieu. Traditional bourgeois aesthetics posits absolute and eternal criteria by which all works are to be universally measured and judged and to be thus included or excluded from the circle of canonized texts. This, however, only conceals the ideological strategy in the realm of aesthetics to maintain ruling class domination.

In literature, absolute belletristic norms complement the concept of the artist as privileged individual in terms of superior talent and access to resources rather than as eloquent spokesman of his society and time. Formalism, in particular, is bourgeois critical practice which concerns itself solely with the so-called "intrinsic" features of the work and which regards it as a closed entity in which the various elements are brought into and contained in a delicate equilibrium. It is a concept of art homologous to the world view of an unchanging order in which each being is assigned to his fixed and "proper" place and function and where to rebel is but a temporary and annoying aberration within the

system. To assume this view is to fall ultimately into the universalist ideology by which imperialist interests seek to expand their cultural hegemony as concomittant to economic domination. Moreover, what is advanced as "universal" is defined from the vantage of Western cultural chauvinism.

In the ideology of history, ideas are seen to constitute in themselves the motive force of the historical process and therefore the institutions in which ideas are produced and the channels of their dissemination constitute the lifeblood of social life. Divorced from the historical process, from *praxis* itself, culture assumes a metaphysical and purely speculative character and becomes an instrument of alienation (Worseley, 1984). Of course, an offshoot of elitism in culture is the interpretation of history in terms of a series of hero-figures and personalities, often prominent members of the dominant class. These are put forward as the movers of history while the principal role of the people in mass movements and social change is largely disregarded.

A paradox of bourgeois idealism is that while it asserts the lofty and absolute autonomy and purity of culture, the system itself commodifies it, following capitalist necessity, and subjects it to the laws of the marketplace. Culture in its specific forms and expressions thus becomes reified as a packaged product to be bought, manipulated, and discarded at will, with its own built-in obsolescence to keep the wheels of the culture industry grinding. Reduced to an object of consumption, culture and its acquisition become determined by the capacity to buy.

Not to be overlooked is liberalism as a component of the bourgeois ideology. Among its projects are the demand for parliamentary reforms, the safeguarding of human rights in the context of counterinsurgency, and the guarantee of the constitutional processes. In the specific Philippine context, liberals are often staunch nationalists and anti-fascists and as such count among the progressive forces in broad unity. However, liberalism *per se* has often served to effect the containment of the people's national democratic

aspirations within the parameters of the status quo through its political and legal institutions.

The Ideology of Dictatorship

For the US-Marcos dictatorship to perpetuate itself in power and to ensure its continuing plunder of the country's resources in the face of increasing popular opposition, with the struggle in the countryside as its principal form, it pursued two complementary strategies:

First, it intensified its coercive power by the escalation of military force with the help of American aid. The Marcos clique realized that it had lost its hegemony and could thus hold on to power only through the use of widespread state terrorism. Its historically unprecedented wealth and privilege built from bureaucrat capitalist corruption and the redistribution of property among its new oligarchs had assumed such gigantic proportions that they had to be defended at all costs. In this case, the State functioned, in a most striking manner, as the repressive-coercive instrument of the ruling elite.

Secondly, it invested heavily in culture for its national and international image-building. Since the proclamation of martial law in 1972, it contrived an extravagant ideological superstructure in the hope that culture, through the variety and refinement of its persuasion, could impart legitimacy to the dictatorship. Its image-building through the visual arts, music, literature, theater, dance, and the cinema was pursued in lavish art patronage on the national but more especially on the international level. It encouraged the discovery of old Filipino masters and their works for these to lend the regime the air of aristocratic venerability with the lucrative side effect of stimulating the art market in old works. It created cultural institutions, and subinstitutions, baited literary artists with contests and awards, thereby taking advantage of their economically depressed condition in order to gain their support. Tourism, in its local practice as a cosmetological and face-lifting trade, was called into

service particularly in the more mundane function of aggressively promoting Filipina pulchritude to white business clients.

It is of special note that in elaborating the so-called Filipino Ideology, the State, upon the declaration of martial law in 1972, attempted, with the cooperation of bureaucratic opportunists, the disarticulation of some elements in the national democratic discourse, such as nationalism and the populist call to "serve the people" with the principle of "from the masses to the masses" and the rearticulation of these into the discourse of the dictatorship. State ideology was given a deceptive revolutionary cast, as Marcos himself claimed the title of "revolutionary." But this transparent ploy was easily recognized as spurious by the broad masses. It was, of course, the growing success of the political propaganda of the progressive forces from the late Sixties to the First Quarter Storm that motivated the State's counter-strategy to seize and coopt this political and ideological momentum.

State ideology was also supplemented by a continental fare of euphonious words, the old idealist trio of the True, the Good, and the Beautiful with their distinct universalist ring and all that it implies of an unchanging and eternal order. The very concept of Manila as "City of Man" partakes of this idealist and idealizing tone with its etherealization of a concrete and all-too-mortal reality.

The State likewise proffered a populist humanism (*Ang Tao Higit sa Lahat* or "Man Above All") with the stress on compassion duly illustrated by charity projects as public performances and media copy. Thus, governmental functions in social welfare became translated into benevolence and charity to elicit gratitude from the impoverished masses. At the same time, it made place, alongside the lofty, for the commercialization of sex in the media, the films of the Experimental Cinema of the Philippines, and in tourism that bred the gross exploitation of women and children.

Ideological mystification operating in economic values was seen in the *Sariling Sikap* ("Personal Initiative") and

KKK programs which served to give the masses false hopes of prosperity in the system and to obscure the social character of the economic struggle and give it a purely individual definition. Incidentally, part of the State's subliminal ideological persuasion lay in the peculiar use of acronyms for its projects, such as BLISS and PAG-IBIG ("Love"), which, instead of arousing the desired pleasurable associations, only pollute and debase the original connotation of the words.

As earlier pointed out, the regime mobilized the feudal values of the family and its paternalistic aspect in order to entrench itself in power and to project the dynastic ambitions of the Marcos family. It made use of religion in its most conservative aspects of pure visual spectacle with monarchic iconography, of uncritical emotionalism and gullible fanaticism to legitimize its authoritarian rule and to disseminate its counterrevolutionary propaganda.

Other practices of mystification include the manipulation of the political concepts of country and regime in which "country" is made synonymous to "regime," following which the love and defense of country is translated into the love and defense of the regime. In this connection, the Marcos regime likewise appealed to the Filipino's love of country in an effort to stir up a nationalistic euphoria within a fascist context, with the aid of slogans such as *Isang Bansa, Isang Diwa* ("One Country, One Mind"). It is a common and familiar ploy of dictatorships to appeal to nationalism and to unify the people under a regime by projecting a myth of greatness ("This Country will Be Great Again") and by glorifying the people's racial identity (*lahi*) while glossing over the gross social inequalities and the exploitation of the many by the few. At the same time, nationalism was subsumed under the concept of "global citizenship" in order to provide a rationale for the continuing domination of foreign monopoly capital. To serve its purposes, the State assiduously attempted to appropriate the national-popular culture into its ideological discourse in order to project a broad popular base, while in the Asian and international

scene, the dictatorship projected the image of leadership in the "family of nations" in order to secure international support.

An important part of the coercive power of the Marcos dictatorship lay in its control over culture in diverse ways, direct and indirect. The most evident direct control was exercised in the mass media with the crony ownership since martial law of the leading newspapers, TV channels, and radio stations. Alongside these, it put up a State propaganda machinery which filtered and manipulated information and fed the media the sanitized version of the news.

In education, control was exercised through the curriculum and textbook programs which were conveyors of State ideology in order to guarantee the uncritical receptivity of the younger generations. Up to the present, it is an educational system which continues to perpetuate miseducation, the erosion of the national consciousness, and the condition of colonial servitude.

The use of the educational system as an adjunct of the regime and imperialist interests was further intensified by the World Bank Project for Decentralized Education (PRO-DED) which controls curricula and textbooks. The values conveyed in the social studies textbooks in particular were those of the Filipino Ideology which would perpetuate the structures of the dictatorship. The ideology of the New Society was enhanced by social scientists who made use of indigenous cultural patterns such as *utang-na-loob* (gratitude), *hiya* (shame), *pakikisama* (getting along with people), and *bahala na* (leave it to God) as fixed elements in a value system that supposedly defines the Filipino identity. Key values are identified as personalism, supernaturalism, particularism, and harmony. The emphasis was placed on conformism (fear of rejection and sensitivity to personal affront), conflict-avoidance (desire to please and smooth interpersonal relations or SIR), family closeness and submission to authority, harmony, and a fatalistic, nonscientific, and non-rational world view. All in all, this value system which continues to be propagated through education suppresses

the people's will and legitimizes authoritarianism.

To counteract progressive cultural forces and neutralize opposition, the regime put up unions and cultural organizations of literary writers, journalists, and media workers. In addition, there was the important and ever present fact of censorship in all areas of culture, especially in the film industry and the print media in which the military plays a conspicuous role. It was State censorship and repression which cost the lives and freedom of many writers and journalists in recent years.

In sum, such a culture based on feudal, colonial, and comprador-bourgeois ideological elements propagated by the State is to be exposed as antipeople and contrary to their true interests and aspirations.

The New People's Culture

Such a heavy ideological baggage foisted on the people by the past colonial regimes and the series of subsequent governments, especially by the Marcos dictatorship, and, at present, by the Aquino government must necessarily be rejected by the continuing effort of the cultural revolution.

This new people's culture takes on two essential tasks:

First of all, it assumes the campaign of demystification in exposing the myths and deceptions in the superstructure in the field of ideas, cultural expressions, and values.

Secondly, the new culture must grow, develop, and articulate a rich structure based on the people's conditions, needs, struggles, and aspirations. Not a mere passive reflection of the base, culture assumes an active role as a material force to effect change. In this revolutionary role, the new culture goes hand in hand with the people's struggle on a nationwide scale.

As a force of liberation, the people's culture advances the qualities of national, scientific, and mass. These qualities are viewed not as separate descriptive elements but as necessary and integral components which constitute the progressive discourse. The character of *national* upholds the

country's sovereignty as the basis of national unity and identifies the broad range of people's forces united in struggle for a free and democratic society, liberated from the domination of foreign monopoly capital. The character of *scientific* rejects the mystifications of metaphysical idealism and posits the derivation of truth from concrete reality. The character of *mass* implies the participation of all exploited and oppressed classes and sectors from the peasantry and the proletariat to the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie in antagonistic opposition to US imperialism and its local agents in the Marcos and now Aquino government with the basic masses of workers and peasants as the preeminent forces at the helm.

National

The national character of the new culture asserts the people's sovereignty and independence. It promotes the dignity and self-respect of the Filipino people who regain their sense of national dignity and consciousness.

It unites the broad masses of the people — the peasants, workers, petty bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie and all progressive sectors against the power bloc of US imperialism and its present local agents in the big landlord and comprador bourgeoisie classes.

The concept of national transcends the regional ethnicities and brings together all progressive forces from all parts of the country with their cultural traditions and religious beliefs. At the same time, the new culture gives special attention to the problems of the national minorities, victims of colonial and neocolonial prejudice, exploitation and neglect, while respecting their culture and expressions. This involves preserving their identity and safeguarding their various ethnic interpellations in their specificity as these are constituted into the progressive discourse. The people's living traditions shape our common identity and thus are not to be regarded as mere "residues" of earlier periods to be eventually superseded in the course of historical development.

The articulation of the new culture necessitates the refocusing and sharpening of the concept of nationalism. It is a function of metaphysical idealism to hypostasize it into an absolute and ahistorical entity consisting of ethnic, linguistic, and traditional cultural moments. On the contrary, it is necessary to historicize the concept of nationalism and to demonstrate its historicity by investigating the changing configurations that it has taken within different ideological discourses. Within what ideologies, for instance, did the nineteenth century articulate nationalism, or, for that matter, its concept of culture? What were the cultural forms in which nationalism was expressed? The definition of nationalism changes from the Propaganda to the Revolution, to the American Period, the postwar era during which was acutely posed the issue of national identity, to the Sixties, the First Quarter Storm, and the martial law regime. The principal moments in the definition of nationalism are found in the formulations of the 19th century Propagandists, Rizal most eminently; the *Katipunan* of Bonifacio; Mabini in the early American Period; Claro M. Recto in the postwar period; and Jose Ma. Sison in the late Sixties with the emergence of the national democratic movement.

The content of nationalism shifts according to the ideology and political discourse into which it is articulated with class interest as the articulating principle (Laclau, 1977). The ruling elite has mobilized the concept of nationalism to its use because of its strong emotional appeal to the sense of country, and implicitly, to home and family and to "all one holds sacred." Nationalism has always served as a potent rallying point for unity. This is why the concept has often been fertile ground for ideological mystification. For one, it has often been equated with patriotism or love of country. In this case, the political content of nationalism is subtly obscured to give way to its purely sentimental and emotional connotations. The mystification is carried further as country becomes synonymous to regime. Another form of ideological manipulation common to fascist regimes

consists in foregrounding the common racial and cultural heritage and using these to make populist appeals for unification under the regime. The strategy of *Isang Bansa Isang Diwa* obscures the exploitative neocolonial relations and thereby disguises and perpetuates their operation. Now as in the past, safe or permissible nationalism is based on culture and tradition, but when it moves towards economic nationalism, as in the Filipino First policy, strong interventions are made to suppress it.

Nationalism as an ideological element with no definite class-belonging has been articulated into a wide variety of discourses, such as the discourse of the reformist *ilustrado* and that of the revolutionary *Katipunan*. In our time, it is found in fascist discourse, as in the Marcos ideology, as it is in the national democratic discourse — two antagonistic discourses. The difference lies in their respective articulating principles: in the first, where nationalism is combined with the feudal-colonial and bourgeois comprador ideology and with authoritarianism bearing a strong military component, the principle is reactionary conservatism. In the second, where it is associated with antiimperialism and the popular aspirations, the principle is propeople and revolutionary.

In its historical dimension, nationalism in the national democratic discourse integrates the progressive and national-popular aspects of the culture of all periods, past and present, into the new culture, thereby delineating the historical continuity of the people's identity, particularly as it brings to the fore the long tradition of the people's struggle for independence and sovereignty expressed in the many forms that make up our cultural heritage. This includes a wide range covering ritual prototheater, folk artistic expressions, the *kundiman* in music, the Tausug epic form *parang sabil*, *Florante at Laura*, Luna's *Spoliarium*, the historical paintings of Carlos Francisco, street plays, social realist murals, songs of struggle from the countryside, among many others.

We are witnessing today a growing cultural production in the various media — literature, theater, music, the visual arts in all regions, urban and countryside — that announces the

emergence of a true people's culture. This has been disseminated nationwide in popular theater, music, poetry, drawn from the people's experiences, through publications and anthologies of poetry, stories, and songs, through cassette tapes, through popular visual forms such as portable murals, posters, cartoons, and illustrations, as well as through the various regional cultural publications.

Special attention is given to language with the development of the national language as the official medium of instruction and communication. At the same time, regional languages and literatures are to be encouraged as part of the people's culture. It is important, however, that in the language issue, narrow ethnic regional interests which are a carry-over from colonial divide-and-rule tactics be overcome in favor of the national language constituted from and enriched by the many regional languages as a valuable element of our national identity and sovereignty. English can remain usable in the areas of international exchange.

It is instilling national consciousness in the younger generations that a decolonized and progressive education plays an important role. Education, in its present set-up is an institutional adjunct of the ruling elite through which it disseminates its ideology through the curriculum, textbooks, and various foreign-funded programs. An alternative education will be removed from the control of the ruling elite and geared to serve the people's interests and welfare.

National identity, a concept allied to nationalism, is also often subject to ideological distortion. For one, it does not consist in a static enumeration of qualities on the social, moral, and aesthetic planes which are purported to constitute the Filipino identity. Such a concept would only reify the Filipino character to an ahistorical and idealist essence. While the existence of common traits is recognized, national identity, however, must be viewed in perspective as developing in a dynamic and dialectical relationship to the historical process. Its definition, therefore, cannot be pegged to a particular period, such as the indigenous precolonial

period or the 19th century Propaganda and Revolution.

Then, too, as national, it is not defined solely in terms of the urban cultural experience or in terms of the middle class alone, which is often the case, but more importantly, in terms of the broad masses and their interests and aspirations. It is the national democratic articulation of the concept of national identity which alone can bring together the rich pluralities of the people's culture, the ethnic, the linguistic, and the religious, to a true unity and solidarity. The key to the meaning of national identity lies in a politicized and decolonized consciousness fully self-aware, critical, and engaged in the pursuit and praxis of national liberation.

Scientific

The scientific character of the new culture rejects the metaphysical and idealist world view with its mystifications regarding human nature, the economic and political structures, and the historical process that perpetuates exploitative relations. It opposes superstition which makes man live uncritically within a closed mold of unfounded beliefs, values, practices, and prejudices rendering them resistant to liberating change. Superstition, however, is not to be construed as synonymous to folk traditions which contain usable technologies suited to local conditions and resources and which also include valuable forms of cultural expression. What is to be discarded has to do with ways of thought and practices which hinder the development of social and political consciousness, which constrict the productive forces and obstruct technological invention and scientific growth, and those which, by their strong emotional charge, foster blind fanaticism.

Also to be opposed are all forms of obscurantism, dogmatism, and prejudice which block the perception of one's rights, interests, and tasks. In this, education, along with the drive for literacy, can do much to instill the scientific outlook. Teaching, guided by democratic rather than op-

pressive pedagogy, should develop the critical and investigative frame of mind. Contrary to metaphysical obscurantism, the scientific outlook holds that the material world exists and is knowable, and that truth is derived from the study and investigation of concrete reality. Things and phenomena do not exist in isolation and do not have an absolute or fixed nature and properties. On the other hand, all phenomena are relative to one another in complex and ever-changing relationships. At the same time, the dynamic contradictions embedded in the heart of things as opposing properties, aspects, tendencies, and characteristics generate continual transformation and change. Applied to history, the dynamics of the historical process lies in the development of the basic contradiction between the productive forces and the productive relations manifested in the people's struggle in the economic, political, and ideological fields.

Within this framework, normative criticism involves recognizing and exposing ideological deceptions and opting for liberative, propeople values. Practice involves social investigation and exposure to the life of the basic masses from whose experience of struggle is derived the principal content of the new culture.

Still in this context, art and culture are viewed as perspectival within social and historical coordinates. Rather than stressing the dichotomy of form and content in art, one perceives their true dialectical relationship in which they dynamically interact and interpenetrate. While art has its specificity — its vocabulary and particular resources of medium and technique — the values that it conveys necessarily reestablish it in the ground of lived reality and hence it becomes related, directly or indirectly through various mediations, overtly or covertly, to the ideological struggle. Aesthetics, likewise, is not absolute, eternal, nor given once and for all, but is historically situated and originates from a particular ideological discourse. Given these, it is essential that the new art and culture draw their life and vitality from the rich ground of Philippine reality and history.

Mass

The mass character of the new culture signifies its espousal of the true interests and aspirations of the people, including all the exploited and oppressed classes of Philippine society from the peasantry to the national bourgeoisie, all of which suffer from the domination of imperialism and foreign monopoly capital.

Needless to say, this culture is to be sharply dissociated from the artificial mass culture produced by the dominant class for the consumption of the masses in order to keep them uncritical, ignorant, and unfree. This kind of culture exploits the masses as a large market of consumers at the same time that it greatly underestimates, if it does not stifle, their capacities.

In contradistinction, the new culture which is based on truly democratic premises combats the degraded popular culture produced by the ruling class for mass consumption. At the same time, it opposes the elitist conception of culture which defines it as the preserve of the privileged few or which proffers the tastes and values of the dominant class for emulation.

The new culture is created and enriched by the efforts and contributions of the broad alliance of progressive forces with the basic masses of the workers and peasants at the helm.

An important element of this culture is the production of progressive artists, intellectuals, specialists, and cultural workers from the petty bourgeoisie. Part of their output is addressed to the urban professional sector in the function of politicizing, enlarging, and strengthening the base of the people's solidarity. At the same time, they join the mainstream movement of the people's struggle in which they create with the masses from whom they learn and with whom they share skills in a mutual relationship.

The development of the new culture involves the complementary activities of popularization and raising of standards. Popularization includes both content and form.

Progressive content in the arts, whether in the visual arts, literature, music, and theater, is more effectively disseminated through the use of popular, indigenous, and readily available forms, the use of which will inspire creativity on a larger scale as well as oppose artistic elitism. Also important in popularization is the development of an effective network of communication and regional exchange.

The use of indigenous forms is particularly striking in music in which the *salidom-ay*, *ismayling*, and *composo*, as well as other folk song patterns, have in recent times acquired new content reflecting experiences in an atmosphere of increasing militarization and resistance. In theater, skits and short but effective dramatic forms have been developed to suit the large needs but meager logistics of the countryside. These crystallize in artistic form the life-and-death experiences of the struggle. In literature, poetry in both traditional and free verse, as well as stories, have constituted a significant part of recent production. People's literature has found venues in the regional newspapers and in other publications, a number realized with the help of urban resources. In the visual arts, popularization has called for the development of more popular and accessible forms such as posters, portable murals, calendars, postcards, comics, alongside the production of paintings which can be reproduced or propagated through slide showings. For the visual artists, it has also meant the search for alternative venues for exhibition other than the traditional galleries and museums which exclude a sizeable part of the population. It has also meant the exploration and development of technical reproduction processes in order to move away from the exclusive and elitist context towards a democratic, pro-people orientation.

The task of popularization is not only in the field of literary and artistic expression, but also in other aspects of general culture such as literacy programs, health education, and the grassroots campaign of the national mass movement to free the people from superstition and colonial modes

of thinking. Thus, there are field researches into folkways such as herbal remedies and indigenous healing methods in order to systematize and enhance their use and application. In general, however, popularization means the widest dissemination of the national democratic outlook both in theory and in the practice of struggle.

While popularization proceeded from 1969 to 1976, the raising of standards became a felt need and moves were undertaken to make culture, specifically in its literary and artistic forms, serve the needs of a burgeoning mass movement, both in the countryside and in the urban centers starting in 1977. This second task involved the reassessment of cultural work and the enhancement of its productions. Stereotypes, outworn techniques, and sloganeering are discarded for a realism derived from actual experiences and investigations into the conditions of the basic masses. Both elementary and complex forms are developed in response to different needs and situations. The artist, whether he be of the basic masses or of the petty bourgeoisie, strives to intimately know and understand his social reality both in his environment and in the larger national perspective, and, through its contradictions and conflicts, link it to the people's struggle.

It has been the expressed opinion of some elements that the democratization of art and culture would inevitably result in the lowering of standards. This is simply an elitist misconception. For with increasing production in the different cultural forms, skills are developed, experience is enriched, as expectations on the part of the public and the artists reach higher levels which will pose new challenges to be met. It is particularly in this area that artists and specialists from the petty bourgeoisie can contribute their efforts. By sharing their skills from their educational background and by making technologies available, they can enrich the cultural resources in general and help in the raising of standards. Doubtless, the matrix of the progressive culture is in the living and inexhaustible ground of the people's culture which is now infused with the people's will towards

liberation and genuine democracy.

The struggle in the field of culture is an integral part of the mainstream of the mass movement in which the basic masses are at the helm, with the petty bourgeoisie as their closest ally. In this period of the heightening contradiction between the regime controlled by foreign monopoly capital, on one hand, and the awakened Filipino masses on the other hand, the new culture is certainly no longer passive reflection, but, as it is seized by the masses, a potent material weapon for historical change to which we are all both witness and participant.

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US INTERVENTION IN CULTURE

As in the Marcos dictatorship, culture in the Aquino regime is an arena of contention upon which the elite interests of the big landlord-comprador bourgeoisie orchestrate their strategies to preempt, neutralize, and suppress the progressive forces. It is a campaign in which the US elements are supportive and highly visible, relying as they do on the receptivity and hospitality of the government to operate freely in the national scene.

US intervention in culture is linked up with the so-called "peace offensive" which originated from the Vietnam strategy of "winning hearts and minds" of Third World populations to the "American way of life" with the US thereby protecting its strategic interests and maintaining its access to the resources of the "target country," be these raw materials, cheap labor, or military bases as in the Philippines. The state open to various forms of cultural intervention measured by such indices as "leader grants to labor leaders and political elites, percentage of news/features electronic media propaganda originating from the USIS and other

North American sources, percentage of populations within the constituencies of subsidized nongovernment organizations, etc." is referred to in US military parlance as a "penetrated society" exhibiting docility and receptivity to US programs.

As a lesson from its defeat in Vietnam, the US now puts more stock in investigating and studying a country's indigenous culture, traditions, and folk beliefs so that it can work from these as basis to firm up a more effective propaganda that it can use to legitimize its projects. At the same time, there is no let-up in the barrage of cultural materials in the media, the arts, and religion towards the goal of undermining nationalist militancy. As professional staff member of the US Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Dr. Angelo Codevilla stated: "If one nation has built clandestine networks in another country to influence its decisions and exercises that influence repeatedly, then the nation will be able to change or modify the character of the said country's political landscape." He goes further to add that, with some effort, the first country "can even change the other's very culture."

Indeed, a survey of recent developments in culture reveals a marked emphasis on ideological warfare in terms of "peace offensives" and indoctrination programs conducted by the military. These concerted efforts with the participation of different agencies are directed toward the goal of creating ideological alternatives to the challenge of the revolutionary ideology or of creating "surrogate" or substitute structures in this country to stand for American capitalist structures and interests. Such strategies in culture are in line with the Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) with its stress on the ideological aspect of counterinsurgency and on interagency coordination of military and civilian agencies.

Thus, barely a year after the February Rebellion, the National Capital Region Defense Command (NCRDC) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines launched a "peace offensive" to "win the hearts and minds" of the Metro Manilans. (*Midday*, March 30, 1987) This campaign has

been described as bearing "the fine touches of a psywar propaganda package to win the people over to the government side in the face of an aggressive communist propaganda offensive in the urban areas." Dubbed PEACE CORPS, an acronym for People's Enlightenment and Awareness against Communist Expansion; Committed to Orderly, Responsible, Peaceful Society, the project involved the 17 city and town mayors of Metro Manila. Under this project, the CAPCOM (PC) was assigned to the labor sector, the Navy to the urban poor, and Air Force to the business sector, the Army to the professional group and the college cadets to the youth sector. This direction to be carried out on the national level was further stressed by Defense Secretary Ileto at Camp Aguinaldo on April 6, 1987 when he declared that "the war continues" even after the EDSA Rebellion and that "an ideological battle is now being fought through the mass media and through an improved civilian-military relations. . . Now we are fighting a way of thinking. . . (and) the battlefields are in the hearts and minds of the people." This speech given during the ceremonies awarding the AFP and the INP for their role in the "restoration and defense of democracy" in the events of February 1986 follows President Aquino's declaration of "total war" against the revolutionary forces and her martial exhortation to the AFP to deliver "a string of military victories." It is a course clearly in line with US interests, especially since she clamors for more helicopters and war materials from the United States to be used for antipeople counterinsurgency operations.

What is behind these orchestrated strategies in culture? The United States readily invokes the "Soviet threat" as the rationale for its self-appointed caretaker role of "making the world safe for democracy" and, not incidentally, its strategic interests. But as foremost American scholar Noam Chomsky has pointed out, it is not the threat of Soviet aggression that the US has to contend with, but the indigenous nationalist movements in Third World countries which may eventually block the access of the United States to important resources, thereby "endangering" the economic

well-being and the "integrity of the basic institutions" of the US. Thus, the strategies in the field of culture function to maintain, legitimize, and facilitate intervention at the economic and political levels in order to guarantee the protection of US interests. More specifically, the multipronged US pressure at this time is to pave the way for a favorable renegotiation of the bases treaty in 1991 and to ensure the smooth continued operation of the transnational corporations.

On the global level, the ideological expression of the US drive for hegemony — which is, in fact, on the decline — is the Reagan Doctrine which divides the world into black and white: on one hand, countries "friendly" to the United States, many of these dictatorships with a dismal record in human rights but belonging to the zone of US hegemony and therefore worthy of support; on the other hand, countries "hostile" to the United States and which have followed an independent course with socialist governments not congenial to control by US monopoly capital and thereby labeled "totalitarian". As Miles Wolpin points out in his study, *Military Aid and Counterrevolution in the Third World* in the Studies in International Relations and Foreign Policy series, a central strategy is the "indoctrinational emphasis upon linking corporate capitalism ('free enterprise') with 'liberty'." Socialism and theories of the exploitative nature of capitalism are conversely identified with Satanic totalitarianism. These ideological strategies are directed towards shaping and channelling a society's political literacy and consciousness along US lines. In particular, it is the army with its leaders trained in American military institutions such as West Point and Fort Bragg that receives the most massive and sustained dose of US propaganda to make it effective in fulfilling its traditional role of watchdog of US interests.

The Reagan Doctrine has recently been embellished with the Doctrine of the Third Force which favors a constitutional government with the semblance of democracy over outright military rule. This policy coincides with the

centrism of the Aquino government which is an ideological ploy to isolate the progressive forces. The so-called center in which Mrs. Aquino situates herself is, in the Philippine context, an artificially created space between the conservative Right subservient to the US and the revolutionary Left, for, in fact, the "center" carries out the rightist policies of creating a favorable ground for US strategic interests and, in the process, suppressing the people's will towards equality, justice, and sovereignty.

Complementary to centrism and the Doctrine of the Third Force is the ideological position of reformism with its components of reconciliation and nonviolence. Reformism which is the line carried by the Social Democrats or Christian Democrats with which President Aquino has declared her affiliation seeks to coopt the revolutionary movement into the prevailing system by promising or granting concessions in areas such as land reform or labor as palliative measures to defuse revolutionary militancy and to deflect its radical challenge to elite interests. Mrs. Aquino's traditional Catholic background and manifest piety aligns her easily with the Christian Democrats — aside from concrete advantages which may accrue therefrom — and in her speech at the Christian Democrats International conference she declared that "democratic politics" were under way despite what she called the "retrogressive attempt of the Right and the disruptive activities of the Left," in another public assurance of her "centrism."

In this connection, Ray S. Cline, former CIA chief and recent Manila visitor, writing on the CIA role in US foreign policy revealed how the CIA supports reformist groups — and he cites postwar Italy where the CIA supported the Christian Democrats through generous funding and propaganda especially during electoral exercises in the face of a strong radical opposition. Recently, the local Christian Democrats organized as the National Union of Christian Democrats—United Muslim Democrats of the Philippines (NUCD—UMDP) issued a full-page statement of support for President Aquino and a reaffirmation of its participation

in the Lakas ng Bayan Coalition. Furthermore, it straightforwardly pursues the US-sponsored centrist line from its opening statement in which it avers that "the solution to our national crisis lies not in rightist authoritarianism nor in leftist totalitarianism but in Filipino Christian-Muslim Democracy. . . ." Interestingly enough, its first concern is military, the creation of the Citizen Armed Force Geographical Units (CAFGU), as well as a system of people's communication and organization, the *Sanggunian sa Ka-loobang Pilipino*. Again, like the new Reagan-CIA policy, its thrust is ideological with military-civilian coordination, its rightist reactionary nature concealed beneath the mask of centrism. Its program may function as a political component of the Low Intensity Conflict. Basically, it is the traditional US-sponsored Magsaysay-type politics of the mambo-ing Fifties given a new coat of Max Factor paint.

Reconciliation as a policy bannered by the Church hierarchy and used by Mrs. Aquino in her bid for power came at the heels of Ninoy's assassination, while the progressive movement launched the campaign for "Justice for Ninoy Justice for All." Upon her installation as president, Mrs. Aquino released top political prisoners, although a number have been overlooked and still languish in jail to the present. With this gesture, she expected the NPAs to come down from the hills and lay down their arms, but instead the revolutionary movement issued a call for the dismantling of the structures of dictatorship. Up to the present, however, the antipeople structures remain virtually untouched; they have been strengthened, in fact, by increasing militarization with the presidential backing of fanatical paramilitary groups, vigilantes, and spies, as well as the recent revival of the R.A. 1700 or the Anti-Subversion Law, an issue of intense legal struggle during the Marcos years. And while the ceasefire talks could be viewed as part of the government's reconciliation program, President Aquino and the government panel considered it as a mere formal and somewhat troublesome exercise, the only desired outcome of which could be amnesty and mass surrender, in the absence

of any real desire to understand, much less appreciate, what the NDF was trying to convey in terms of the perception and solution of the country's problems. All in all, it became reduced to a strategy that the US and the US-backed Aquino regime could maneuver to their favor without conceding anything in the process.

An essential part of reformism is the ideological position of nonviolence to be propagandized as the desirable option. But this position decontextualizes and abstractizes violence which is considered apart from specific historical conditions. It refuses from the start to consider a situation in which armed struggle may arise out of the necessity to defend the population from systematic state violence in which the military is commonly used in the service of the exploiting classes to break strikes, demolish squatters' shanties, protect various elite and transnational interests, intimidate and injure protesters in demonstrations and suppress legitimate dissent in general.

It is well to note that reconciliation and nonviolence are not the simple political stances they seem to be. For one thing, the nonviolent position betrays an essential bias: while it overlooks or condones the institutionalized violence of the ruling elite to safeguard its interests, it condemns the violence which arises from the masses defending themselves against injustice. And curiously enough, ideological programs for reconciliation and nonviolence receive funding and support from a number of international agencies. One such is the International Fellowship of Reconciliation based in Alkmaar, Netherlands, of which Jose Blanco, S.J. is the Philippine Secretary as he is also the head of AKKAPKA, its local counterpart. Blanco heads the group of anti-Marxists committed to "nonviolent" action. He also wrote the foreword to Silliman theology professor Douglas J. Elwood's *Faith Encounters Ideology*, a strongly anti-Marxist tract on religious debates, in which Blanco writes that "a Christian should never give himself *without reservation* (*italics his*) to any movement for social change or social preservation." The same book also contains a long and detailed

entry in the appendix summarizing *The Methods of Non-violent Action*, a book written by one Gene Sharp for the Harvard University's Center for International Affairs. Another international institution is the Carnegie Endowment for Peace which funded *People Power*, the "official" text on the EDSA revolt edited by James Reuter, S. J. This book enjoyed the privilege of a spectacular launching on military grounds complete with an aerial act of the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM) boys, headed by Col. "Gringo" Honasan, descending like angels from heaven (with the help of material parachutes) to stress the "miraculous" nature of the "revolution." The introduction written by the same Gene Sharp, now identified as the Director of the Institute for Nonviolent Sanctions in the abovementioned Harvard Center, lauds the bloodlessness of the February revolt and takes occasion to denigrate the revolutionary government. The book's overall interpretation of this event as a "miraculous phenomenon" attributed to divine intercession is a striking example of how the ruling class mystifies political events for its own needs.

US intervention in culture is carried out through a number of agencies and international ideological apparatuses, and their well-oiled and coordinated functioning gives the impression of a massive orchestrated effort. These agencies, many of them public and governmental, also include important private nongovernmental bodies. Among them are the IMF-World Bank, the CIA, the USIS or USIA, the Peace Corps, Hollywood, private foundations such as the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, and recently, the Moonie satellite organizations, particularly CAUSA, its political-ideological arm.

Four decades after the declaration of formal independence in 1946, the United States has not relinquished its hold on Philippine education and shows no signs of relaxing its control. From the first Thomasites at the turn of the century through the Commonwealth *pensionados* and scholarship grantees, US influence has been active in our educational system through the IMF-World Bank projects, particularly the Program for Decentralized Education (PRODED) which

funds and monitors textbooks and curricular programs. During the Marcos regime, textbooks were permeated by the state ideology which shored up the structures of the dictatorship and disseminated a value system in line with US interests. These programs have continued into the Aquino government. In a news item in *Midday* (March 1, 1986), the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports stressed the importance of extending the foreign-assisted program, PRODED, beyond 1986. A ministry official stated that its curriculum component is particularly important in order to "pursue the MECS thrust of upgrading the quality of education and formation of 'nationalistic and humanistic' values among school-children." Studies have shown, however, that the World Bank educational programs have had a contrary effect, that of weakening the sense of nationhood of our young students at the elementary and secondary levels.

Even the University of the Philippines has closely hewn to the original concept of its founding in the early years of the American colonial regime, that is, as an institution to guarantee a continuous succession of elites, friendly and oriented to the United States in terms of economic, political and cultural-ideological values. It is a system which places premium on postgraduate studies in US colleges and universities in an academic atmosphere which reinforces certain myths, among them the neutrality of culture and the supremacy of the "American way of life." Particular mechanisms in the university system have assured this continuity, such as admission policies which prioritize English language proficiency, thus favoring graduates from exclusive high schools. This American tutelage of the country's intelligentsia has paid off handsomely for the United States with far-reaching results, so that the ideology of the "American way of life" is transmitted by successive generations of teachers naturally and voluntarily, as though there was no other viable option. This is done especially through textbooks, mainly anthologies of writings by conservative Americans with a Cold War mentality.

Continuing interventionist programs for the academe

include annual seminars for educators and student leaders. The proceedings of the Seventh Annual Seminar for Student Leaders held in Tagaytay in 1975 were compiled in book form and introduced by the Fourth of July statement of then US President Gerald Ford. The conference topics had to do with American history and aspects of American life, particularly art, with two concluding lectures on American economic theory and practice and another on US foreign policy by US embassy personnel assisted by prominent Filipino corporate personalities. The objective of such a seminar is to promote specialization in American studies among Filipino scholars and to make them internalize American social and cultural values. A similar program is the American Studies Seminar which is a project of the Philippine-American Educational Foundation and the American Studies Association of the Philippines. The proceedings of the 11th American Studies Seminar in 1976 was also published under the title *Literature and Society: Cross-Cultural Perspectives*. Evidently, the convenient term "cross-cultural" conceals the reality of imperialist intervention in culture. This is another strategy to monitor and channel local cultural developments along lines favorable to US interests.

Likewise, for the academe, foundations with international operations are important cultural channels of the United States. Widely sought as funding agencies for projects in this country of underpaid academics, they continue to enjoy an aura of neutrality perpetuated by sectoral interests and have not come under close scrutiny for their role in the system as a whole. What is important is that these foundations create secondary satellite institutions and fund over a period of time specific programs dealing with concrete social conditions and following identifiable goals and desired effects, and thereby have a long-term cumulative capacity to transform society or certain target areas. In short, they have a distinct manipulative capacity brought out in their operations.

The journal *Daedalus* in its Winter 1987 issue on *Philanthropy, Patronage, and Politics* exposes these foundations as instruments of imperialist and class domination. The preface

refers to Gramsci, the eminent Italian Marxist active in the 1920s: "For Gramsci, the dominant class in a society will invariably use its power to articulate views and propagate opinions that keep subordinate elements in line; the genius of such a class is that it creates institutions, like foundations, to achieve their ends. This is rarely openly acknowledged; it may even be covertly thought of. This does not make it less true." From this premise, it proceeds to raise the question as to "whether American foundations have not always served essentially conservative ends, recruiting intellectuals and scholars primarily for that purpose."

Indeed, this seems to be the case with Ford Foundation, to take one example. A study in the same journal shows its intercultural program to be marked by a Cold War orientation; even more, it has undertaken programs which the US government felt compelled to refrain from. This particular function of foundations ties up perfectly with the present trend of "privatization" of intelligence and political operations in the US government in which private agencies take over from where the government recognizes its legal limits.

In these times of political and ideological ferment, an important function of foundations is to form and strengthen ideological alternatives that could effectively preempt radicalization and the mobilization of the masses to assert their legitimate demands. Intellectuals awarded with grants are kept busy in various "alternative projects." After the assassination of Ninoy Aquino, there was an overnight proliferation of programs and discussion groups on "alternatives" in economy, politics, culture, education, science, technology, etc. This trend in alternatives, in retrospect, was apparently aimed to bring out the active participation of the middle forces and to monitor and channel their alternative programs towards "acceptable" terms. But if during that period, the term "alternative" was used vis-a-vis the Marcos structures, its meaning eventually shifted to "alternatives" to radical programs of people's organizations. An intended summation of such alternatives was the series of seminars sponsored by the Asia Foundation and Ford Foundation put together as the

"Filipino Agenda for the 21st Century." The result of the deliberations was to project the continuity of the prevailing structures in terms defined by the participants, leading figures from the military, economic, political, and cultural establishment.

A survey of projects encouraged by these foundations in the Philippines shows a large number to be in the field of the indigenous traditions — thus the many studies on the traditional arts and the general heightening of public interest in this area. It is of particular interest to discover that the Ford Foundation cultural program specifically underlines the "revitalization of traditional indigenous values." This policy came to the fore after the US defeat in Vietnam. From 1967, the Ford Foundation field representatives emphasized the necessity of studying national differences in terms of racial, ethnic, and religious aspects. Along the new line of "cultural development" and "nation-building", foundations stressed the preservation of regional cultural infrastructures through archaeological and historical programs, the revival of traditional religions, the strengthening of religious ideologies, and grassroots projects in the social sciences, while at the same time training managerial elites for leadership in culture. In the context of the Cold War, or the New Cold War, as Noam Chomsky puts it, these values, concerns, and activities are viewed and encouraged as providing acceptable alternatives that keep a significant section of the population contained within safe limits. One example that the journal *Daedalus* cites is the Council for Living Traditions funded in 1974 by a "group of Filipino humanists" with encouragement, advice and funding from Ford, along with its Indonesian counterpart, the Traditional Arts Committee. Of course, an extreme and particularly reprehensible example of cultural manipulation is CIA operative Col. Edward Lansdale's use of folk belief in the *aswang* in the anti-Huk campaign of the Magsaysay Fifties.

But this does not mean, however, that cultural work in the indigenous traditions at once becomes suspect. The question is who funds the programs, what guidelines are to be

observed, and to what ends the studies are to be used. For these traditions constitute a rich body of folk culture which is a terrain of contention between conflicting social interests and which defines the national specificity of the struggle. The field of indigenous culture provides ample opportunities for the articulation of familiar and popular symbols into ideological discourses.

One American cultural group which has been active in the Philippines for a number of years now is the Summer Institute of Linguistics. There is more than meets the eye in their activities. Under the guise of scholarly research in linguistic traditions, it is, in fact, the same entity as the Wycliffe Bible Translators, Inc., said to be the largest Protestant missionary society in the world today in terms of personnel sent abroad, to the countries of Africa, Asia, including the Philippines. What is particularly significant is that the SIL/WBT targets the poor communities of the national minorities where it conducts proselytizing campaigns in which religion is a vehicle for reactionary imperialist propaganda. Writing of these "pious infiltrators", Louis Wolff writes: "Their patented form of missionary zeal dictates that the Word of God is the path to eternal salvation and that if only 'heathen' or 'ignorant' peoples can be brought around to embrace it, Satan will be defeated. All opponents of SIL/WBT are automatically branded agents working for Satan. Who is Satan? He doesn't have a surname but all in the field have been introduced in their training. Satan is Godless communism. And who is God? The United States of America, working together with God in Heaven." Moreover, their community work in remote areas goes way beyond their avowed linguistic, cultural, and religious aims to the exploitation of indigenous resources for US corporate gains; that is, obtaining and protecting access to mineral, timber, and agricultural resources; gaining psychological control over isolated indigenous populations and implementing counter-insurgency operations among these communities by manipulating their religious beliefs. This is in line with the CIA activity of manipulating the traditional beliefs of poor tribal

groups with no access to education. Their members are recruited as vigilantes, their fanaticism encouraged in the incidents of gory killings of suspected NPAs and sympathizers and the dislocation of thousands of families from their ancestral lands.

The Summer Institute of Linguistics began its operations in the Philippines in 1953 when then President Ramon Mag-saysay invited the institute to carry out its cultural programs in the country. Since then, they have been continuously active, especially since each SIL language project averages 15 to 20 years. In fact, it seems that they can look forward to a long stay since the SIL enjoys "the assistance and cooperation of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports and other government agencies," as a report in *Malaya* (February 1, 1987) stated. According to the same report, the SIL has been particularly active among the Bilaan and the T'boli. Among the Umiray Dumagat, a group of Agta living in the hinterlands of Aurora, American SIL volunteers have conducted literacy classes. They prepare vernacular folktale books and make available atlases, health books, agricultural information and of course, the Bible according to SIL. Thus, the education of our national minorities is offered by the MECS to foreigners who distort and manipulate traditional culture to serve US interests.

Working along the same lines as the Summer Institute of Linguistics is the Peace Corps, a program of young volunteers started by the Kennedy administration to spread the gospel of the "American way of life" beyond American shores. In the Philippines at present, the Peace Corps volunteers are given the task of training Filipino teachers in how to teach subjects such as mathematics, science, and English. These foreign volunteer programs and exchange visitors and scholars enjoy official approval.

An active group on campus is the Campus Crusade for Christ founded by Bill Bright, a Presbyterian evangelist. According to a NACLA report, Bill Bright believes that through the CCC he can change the world: "translated into practice, Bright's plan is an ambitious marketing scheme to

sell Jesus Christ — and the American Way — to the entire world." In 1986, Bright organized EXPLO '86 held at the University of Life in December with Billy Graham as one of the speakers. Countering the influence of Liberation Theology, the Campus Crusade for Christ has rallied student and public support for "Pro-American" causes such as CIA intervention in Nicaragua, El Salvador and the Third World in general, or the US nuclear arms budget.

Still in the field of education, there was a recent exposé on CIA efforts to make inroads into teachers' associations through their affiliation with the AFL-CIO and its local agents. Progressive faculty organizations have resisted CIA-backed federations which would interfere in the teachers' exercise of the right to self-organization. These well-funded federations offer to leaders substantial incentives, such as travel and study opportunities in the United States. On the whole, their influence has been to keep teachers' demands on a purely sectoral plane, such as wage increases, allowances for uniforms, Christmas bonus, etc.

Hollywood and the giant US entertainment industry in cinema and TV have also been well-functioning channels of cultural influence as they propagate through popular means the virtues of the "American way of life." This is achieved through their advanced technology in audio-visual and musical entertainment, through appeals to the youth by creating models and fads like rock and punk, through images of the glories of a consumer society as in game shows with their obvious consumerist orientation or TV series with their arrogant capability for the wanton and capricious destruction of goods, and their subtle romanticization of the very rich. Much of current entertainment fare are displays of US technological and military capability in war material and are expressions of the armaments culture and the fetishization of the weapon. There is also a growing trend in Hollywood, reflected locally, of films with a strong ideological and propagandistic slant, such as *Rambo*, *The Deer Hunter*, and *Killing Fields* which bear the Cold War viewpoint.

The CIA, of course, is notorious for its interference in all

fields including culture. Its intervention in culture has been largely covert. And by covert is meant not so much the secrecy of the operation *per se* but that an event or a body of information cannot be traceable to its source, i.e., the US agent. Reagan has considerably expanded the CIA during his term and has refurnished the intelligence arsenal with dirty tricks, among them disinformation, which is the circulation of false information to create an anticipated and desired effect. This practice is based on a double standard and shows a clear bias against Third World peoples because it may be used with impunity in their countries but subject to intensive investigation on charges of "contaminating the press" when employed in the United States. A corollary to disinformation is "plausible deniability" which lays a large ground to absorb a multitude of political lies.

These practices of disinformation and manipulation of public consensus often use the press as captive medium with the help of cooperative journalists as foreign assets. The history of the Philippine press traces its roots to the American colonial period when American journalists held leading positions in Philippine newspapers and tutored fledgling Filipino journalists, not only in the technical aspects of the trade, but more especially in ideological orientation. Up to now, Philippine newspapers get their news mainly from international news syndicates controlled by the United States. Articles by extreme rightists such as Jeane Kirkpatrick, Charles Krauthammer, and Ross H. Munro venting their rabid prejudices on the Philippine Left have found their way to the local press. Local rightists took no time in blowing up Ross H. Munro's vicious piece of disinformation entitled "Beating the Communists in Propaganda Warfare" in which the editor stresses that the army must realize that the battle is one of minds and should therefore strive for a "systematic manipulation of public opinion" along with the "stereotyping of Communists, enlisting of priests and nuns in the army propaganda effort and better sloganeering." The AFP has also invaded the airwaves with their new radio station DZAF which disseminates army propaganda. In Bacolod City,

DYHB with its Radyo Agong Fans Club is a "conduit for conducting psywar campaigns." Military newscasters also hold showings of the movie *Killing Fields* followed by anticommunist lectures.

Another conduit of American propaganda and intervention is the so-called "sister-city relationship program" which was promoted by the late Minister of Local Governments Jaime N. Ferrer. In this program, local units could be assisted by their counterparts abroad in matters relative to city or municipal management, town planning, economic and social programs. Activities would be in product exchange, economic assistance, promotion of mutually beneficial projects, exchange visitor programs, and organized tours. To initiate the program, Ferrer corresponded with Bryan C. Palmer, political counselor of the Christian Democrat International, who would facilitate sister-city relations. Actually this program was launched in 1956 during the Magsaysay administration. According to the report in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* (January 30, 1987), Ferrer said that the Ministry of Local Governments would serve as the secretariat, coordinating center and advisory body of the program.

It seems, however, that the CIA in the Philippines, in the context of the LIC strategy now being implemented in the countryside, has been most active in the field of religion. It is remarkable how far religion, as manipulated by right-wing groups, has gone beyond the familiar orthodoxies of Catholic and Protestant. Under the auspices of the CIA, religion is drawn beyond the original concerns of belief and moral conduct to be used ruthlessly as a tool to destroy the social fabric that makes up the identity of a nation and to make populations vulnerable to chaotic and counter-revolutionary propaganda.

The proliferation of rightwing evangelist sects is not an accidental phenomenon. In the 1969-70 Rockefeller report on the situation in Latin America in the context of US policy interests, then US Vice-President Nelson Rockefeller, faced with the progressive Catholic clergy's "option for the poor," recommended an extensive campaign "with the aim of

propagating Protestant Churches and conservative sects in Latin America" — which is also what is happening in the Philippines today. A study entitled *Sects in Central America* shows the interrelation of these sects such as the Assemblies of God, Churches of God, the Apostolic Church of Faith in Jesus Christ, the Church of the Four Square Gospel, the Church of God of the Whole Gospel, along with Jehovah's Witnesses and the Mormons. These sects build their churches in the midst of depressed areas, and in the more densely populated areas of Davao, for instance, they are as numerous as "military-civilian centers" for vigilantes.

Complementing these are the "religious transnationals," such as World Vision International, Campus Crusade for Christ, 700 Club, and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, all of which have established their influence here. These groups make up the "religious right" and the study states that they are "financed by state organizations, major trusts, and wealthy individuals in the US and by donations of North American fundamentalists. These groups have developed a campaign along with the 'new (political) right' which supports the hard-line policy — internal and external — of the Reagan administration." These organizations also coordinate with rightwing "humanitarian" institutions such as the Heritage Foundation and Americares.

Like the Campus Crusade for Christ, the target of many of these rightwing groups is the youth, particularly the students. A recent group visiting the country, Children of God or Heaven's Magic, used their doctrine of sexual freedom to attract the youth and serve as a shield for their reactionary message. Also circulated in campuses are leaflets, such as one entitled *Which Way* in which a number of ways are rejected as leading to destruction and separation from God and these are: the way of religion, the way of tradition inherited from one's ancestors, the way of good works, the way of human wealth and success, the way of education and the wisdom of this world, the way of self-discipline and sacrifice. The only correct way that will "lead us to abundant life and fellowship with God" is the way of self-surrender to the will of God --

thereby suppressing initiatives to choice and self-determination. This leaflet bears the name of a certain Donald Hill, Davao, 1984.

The large religious group with CIA links is the Unification Church or the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity founded by Sun Myung Moon of Korea in 1980. Bo Hi Pak, Moon's top deputy and former South Korean CIA colonel has admitted receiving CIA funds for his Church called the Moonies. Its thrust is highly ideological. As quoted by Hilarion Henares Jr. in his *Inquirer* series, Bo Hi Pak stresses that it is a "total war" and "basically a war of ideas. A war of minds. The battlefield of the human mind. So in this war, the entire things (sic) will be mobilized: political means, social means, economical means, and propagandistic means. Basically trying to take over other people's mind. That is what the Third World War is all about. The war of ideology. . . . The media organization that we are setting up wants to be utilized as an instrument, an instrument to be used by God." The founder Sun Myung Moon claims to have been specifically sent by God to fulfill the mission which Jesus Christ failed to accomplish. While its very implausibility defies reason and good sense, its extremist rightwing ideology has been put to practical use by the US government since it fits in perfectly with the black-and-white Reagan Doctrine of democracy versus communism.

Among the Moonie satellite organizations are World Media Association, Accuracy in Media, Asian Ecumenical Inter-Faith Council, and CAUSA (Confederation of the Associations for the Unification of the Societies of the Americas) which is its political arm. The CAUSA sponsors a variety of cultural and political programs, such as academic conferences and foreign trips for journalists. From August 12 to 14, it sponsored the International Security Council Conference in Manila consisting of fifteen statesmen and scholars from the Philippines, United States, Japan, Korea and Taiwan to support the American bid to extend the bases agreement after 1991. It also sponsored two conferences on the communist insurgency, the first held in the National Defense College in

Manila and the second held in Manila Hotel on October 4, 1986 which had ex-President Macapagal and then Defense Minister Enrile as major participants. Vice-President Laurel and his wife have also been active in CAUSA.

Another strategy in religion was the bid of the Maharishi group to buy into the local educational institutions, a move which was successfully foiled by militant groups despite endorsement by ex-President Marcos, although they are still around in less conspicuous numbers. The CIA has also been known to collaborate with other religious groups, particularly the Opus Dei which has served as training ground for conservative technocrats, especially in economics, in government positions. Active in the Philippines with members in education and the academe, business and financial institutions, it promotes among its members a fanatical rightist outlook expressed in economics, politics, and culture. An article on the Opus Dei by Fred Landis describes the ideal recruit as "male, young, Latin (Spanish or Latin American), university-educated, technocrat. Inductees are let in on the secret that they are being trained as a technocratic elite which will inherit the earth from ideologies." The Opus Dei has disseminated the line of "de-ideologization" which perfectly coincides with the CIA line. As in its Congress for Cultural Freedom in Milan, Italy with papers which Daniel Bell compiled under the title "End of Ideology." In the United States, the locus of the powerful Catholic Right, including such names as Jeane Kirkpatrick, Vernon Walters, and Alexander Haig, is the Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies which has been described as the "last outpost of CIA-Jesuit collaboration." Because CIA activity is covert and clandestine, we only see the tip of the iceberg, i.e., the effects of their programs in culture and other fields, while their large network lies below the surface.

While most US government officials now place emphasis on ideological manipulation and psywar, as in the implementation of LIC, a number of them, such as Stephen Solarz, in an article for the journal *Foreign Policy*, make it clear that "although it is important for the US to promote demo-

cracy and stem the spread of communist ideology, ideological objectives must not be the primary, let alone sole consideration behind US national interests in each particular case. . . addressing specifics rather than abstractions and realities instead of doctrines." Thus he spells out the bottom line: US national interests in military bases, transnational corporations, raw materials, cheap labor, towards which cultural and ideological strategies and maneuvers are but a means and a smokescreen for the aggressive pursuit of imperialist hegemony. Nevertheless, though US intervention in culture is a formidable reality to contend with, the people's new culture emerging out of the revolutionary struggle will in the long run prevail.

STRATEGIES OF POPULISM

The erstwhile term “people power” is not really new in substance, although its recent spectacular manifestation is still fresh in our minds. It is but a new formulation of the populist theme that, in different forms, has always constituted part of our political experience.

It was the Magsaysay era that played the populist theme to a full orchestra. Wasn't there a heady and euphoric atmosphere that had everybody bouncing to the tune of “Mambo Magsaysay” which, curiously, was a theme song of the Four Days in February? Magsaysay's first gesture in office was to open the gates of Malacañang to the masses, the same gesture that President Aquino emulated at the start. This stems from an appreciation of symbols: if Malacañang is to be the palace of the people, they claim it symbolically by setting foot on it.

After Magsaysay, candidates to public office rivalled in loudly proclaiming peasant or proletarian origins to qualify themselves as “defenders of the poor.” Magsaysay liked to

wear loud polo shirts, rubber shoes and a *buri* hat to project the image of a "man of the masses." Maintaining a high visibility, he took on a personalistic approach to government.

Magsaysay's era was the era of the "common *tao*" ideology. His personal appeal, the ability to draw large crowds, together with his unqualified support of all US projects in the country, made him a valuable asset to the United States.

The "common *tao*" theme was taken up by the late Ninoy Aquino, whose popularity equalled if not excelled that of Magsaysay. A recently reprinted article of Ninoy gives shape to this ideology: "To break through, to rise out of this bondage into the next and higher social stratum is the ambition of the '*tao*' the Filipino common man." In another passage he said: "the wealth that the oligarchy rapaciously covets and hoards must get down to the masses in the form of roads, bridges and schools." From this, one gathers that the "common *tao*" ideology (which was, in fact, enunciated by the dominant classes) serves to neutralize the social reality of exploitation by drawing the workers and peasants to take their places in the competitive system. It also defines the people's perception of government as limited to concrete observable effects of which they are passive beneficiaries.

Today, with higher levels of political consciousness, the "common *tao*" theme no longer suffices. What we now witness are more sophisticated strategies in populist ideologies.

For one thing, populism is a tricky matter as it can be of the dominant or of the dominated classes. But it invariably arises from a people-versus-power-bloc antagonism.

During the Marcos regime, this was expressed in the strong, consistent and organized struggle against the dictatorship in which the battle lines were clearly and sharply drawn.

But populism has another side to it. To quote a Western scholar: "When the dominant bloc experiences a profound crisis because a new faction seeks to impose its hegemony but

is unable to do so within the existing structure of the power bloc, one solution can be a direct appeal to the masses to develop their antagonism to the State." This is what happened in the rise to power of Hitler and Peron in an environment of crisis. Fascism always tries to integrate a strong populist component into its structure.

What happened in the February Rebellion was that a faction of the dominant bloc, the military, broke away from it. Why did it do so?

* Because of the fast deteriorating economic situation which had serious political consequences.

* Because of the dissatisfaction of this faction, which fell outside the favored circle but which shared its links with foreign monopoly capital, with the Marcos system of rewards.

* And because of the increasing strength of the people's resistance — a populism of the dominated classes — which was accompanied by the rejection of American imperialist control.

The democratic-populist thrust of this resistance threatened the system of the traditional privileged in favor of a just and equitable distribution of the country's goods.

The Enrile-Ramos faction in the February Rebellion took advantage of the strong anti-Marcos sentiment built up by the progressive forces. By taking position against a common enemy, Marcos, this faction sought to win over the people's confidence. The hitherto widely distrusted military would become heroes overnight.

There was the much bandied line: "For the first time in history, the people were protecting the military." In reality, the motive of the large numbers who answered the media call was to lend support to the immediate initiative to overthrow the Marcos regime. And although little blood was indeed shed, there was always on hand the military potential to attack and counterattack. The military strategy calling for popular support succeeded in Manila because city dwellers have a relatively lower experience of military repression unlike in the countryside where military operations are a part of everyday life.

The Manila population has also been largely protected from gross abuses by the presence of legal and human rights organizations. Since the military has not been highly visible in the city, the citizen-versus-military antagonism was not strongly developed. Likewise, the strategy immediately appealed to the urban middle classes which were primarily interested in ousting the Marcos dictatorship and subsequently recovering a liberal bourgeois climate marked by greater economic opportunities and the absence of censorship.

The military then lost no time in projecting its new friendly alliance with the urban population as a nationwide phenomenon by the use of the broadcast media.

The next step was for them to identify this popular response and give it a name, "people power," and thus constitute it into a definite entity that can be controlled and directed for future important projects. After all, the crux in people power is who directs it. With antagonism between the people and the military apparently neutralized and with the valuable alliance of the urban middle class, the next project was to identify the enemy." Could it be they who, through the long years of the Marcos regime, took a consistent oppositional stand, sacrificing life and comfort, but whose perspectives go beyond the ousting of a dictator to the thorough dismantling of the structure of neocolonialism and exploitation and by so doing, achieve the people's true liberation? The overthrow of the Marcos regime was made possible by the cumulative experience of people's power in rallies, demonstrations and nationwide mass actions.

People's power rightfully belongs to the people and must remain an instrument of the people.

It cannot be a purely volatile and spontaneous force lending itself to the manipulation of whichever interest. Nor can it be a blind and emotional upsurge of collective energy. It should be guided at all times by the keen and critical understanding of the different forces that seek to sway it.

It would be the height of irony if, in the future, people's power should betray the people themselves.

Manila Times (March 23, 1986), p. 4.

CENTRISM AND THE DOCTRINE OF THE THIRD FORCE

A salient feature of the official discourse of President Aquino is the stress on the centrist character of her administration. In her speeches on diverse topics ranging from the charter and the coup attempts to the government's counter-insurgency drive, Mrs. Aquino has made repeated appeals for the consolidation of the "center" which she builds as her base against the forces of the Left and the Right. It is an official line which is conspicuous for its strident insistence, a propaganda device that proffers a convenient and simple, if not simplistic, ordering of political perceptions.

Mrs. Aquino's centrism which has acquired an ideological cast, however thin and sketchy, may have arisen from her own realization that she is first and foremost a creature of the middle forces. Yet, a deeper investigation shows that her centrist line is not of purely indigenous provenance and reveals the shaping influence of American policymakers. For even before the February Revolution, the United States, which had prodded Marcos to call for

snap elections, was already maneuvering a transition from the Marcos dictatorship to a "liberal" set-up favorable to American interests while undercutting the appeal of the revolutionary forces. Efforts towards that end took the form of breakfast caucuses at the US Embassy such as that held on Nov. 6, 1986 in which *charge d'affaires* Philip Kaplan arranged a meeting between key opposition leaders including Jose Cojuangco and Butz Aquino, and Richard Holbrooke, former Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs. According to a confidential cable cited by Walden Bello, those present were urged by the Americans to field a presidential candidate and were advised not to press for the legislation of the Communist Party or to raise the issue of the US bases since this "would not play well in the US."

The developing foreign policy of the United States was influenced by the high visibility of the middle forces in the period immediately after the Benigno Aquino assassination up to the snap elections. The large anti-Marcos demonstrations brought out into the open the middle forces, particularly the "yellow" rallyists of the Ugarte Field, an educated, well-off middle class, anti-Marcos, to be sure, but sufficiently distanced from the revolutionary Left in the political spectrum, and which sought political participation, economic amelioration, and a guarantee of freedoms which the Marcos regime disallowed. Furthermore, there was the person of Mrs. Aquino herself described by an American as "the best advertisement for the democratic alternative in years."

This set of factors was perceived by US policymakers as constituting the "material conditions" giving rise to a policy shift which would, in particular, allow the withdrawal of US support from Marcos, a longtime friend of the US, in favor of a new candidate with a liberal image, and, in general, would push for liberal regimes in the Third World provided these were sympathetic to "US strategic interests."

During the critical period of the snap elections, an aide to Republican Senator Richard Lugar, who led the team of election observers to the Philippines, explained that what

made the difference in Manila was "the existence of a *middle class alternative* to Marcos, composed of people who talked, acted, and even looked a little like your own friends." The decisive factor that warranted the withdrawal of US support from an "authoritarian government friendly to the US" was, as Sarah Miles, an authority on LIC, pointed out, the existence of a sizable middle class opposition and its capability to form a viable government.

This middle class — or 'middle forces' — was exactly what the US needed and exploited to launch a new direction in its foreign policy, the Doctrine of the Third Force, one which would channel efforts toward installing and supporting a government that would open up a "democratic space" and at the same time would amply guarantee the US's continued access to the country's resources while it enjoyed the advantage of popularity and sizeable consensus. As Charles Krauthammer, *Time* essayist and rightwing articulator of this doctrine, pointed out: "In much of the Third World, the most reliable repository of American strategic interests is what is sometimes called the Third Force."

Along the same line, the breakfast diplomat, Richard Holbrooke, who turned out to be one of the policy architects of the Third Force Doctrine, wrote in a subsequent summing-up article for *Washington Post* that "in the Philippines there was a democratic alternative to the traditional choice between the strongman and the radicals." During the crisis, "the relative uninvolvedness of Reagan himself. . . left his aides free to craft a policy that could respond quickly to agents," and he added with satisfaction that "Aquino's victory. . . is a significant gain for American interests."

What then is the Doctrine of the Third Force? While the Reagan Doctrine proclaims a "global offensive against communism at the fringes of the Soviet Empire" with the distinction spelled out by Jeane Kirkpatrick between "authoritarian governments friendly to the United States" thereby deserving US support, and "totalitarian governments hostile to US interests" or socialist regimes to be overthrown

by means overt and covert, the Doctrine of the Third Force formulates US strategy "in a non-communist setting" faced with a strong revolutionary challenge. As defined by Krauthammer, this had to do primarily with effecting a smooth "transition to democracy" from an authoritarian government friendly to the US to a liberal government no less friendly to the US (possibly even more so), at the same time preventing the revolutionary forces from getting into the political process and seizing the initiative in the event of the collapse of the dictatorship through widespread loss of hegemony. In other words, the Doctrine is for assuring that the US engineer the circumstances of the transition so that it is in control of what succeeds it.

Krauthammer specifically focuses on the Philippine political scene: "The success of US policy in helping the transition of democracy in the Philippines suggests an answer: a doctrine of the third force." He explains: "In friendly countries ruled by dictators, America should use its influence to support a third force, a democratic alternative to a pro-American despot on the one hand, and Communist insurgents on the other. A third force strategy means not settling for the lesser of two evils, but trying to help build a middle, democratic third way." Compared to Iran or Nicaragua, "in the Philippines, by contrast, the center, led and unified by the extraordinary Corazon Aquino, retained its independence. It set itself uncompromisingly between Marcos and the communists. No popular front. No united opposition. No junior partnership with the men with the guns. A third force."

The implications of this Doctrine are, on one hand, the blocking of any coalition with the forces of the revolutionary Left, and, on the other, the discouraging of openly fascist postures that smack of the restoration of authoritarian rule. With this Doctrine, the US takes on a refurbished and attractive image without relaxing its control a whit, in fact even more closely monitoring and intervening in the political and economic processes of the country.

As Krauthammer goes on to emphasize: "The right ma-

terial conditions are necessary for the success of a third force strategy. But not sufficient. Success requires also American will: an America willing to restrain the legalistic scrupulousness about the inviolability of sovereignty, an America confident enough of its purpose to return, once again, to the business of intervention. In short, America in the Philippines." (*Time*, March 10, 1986)

The third force becomes equivalent to the concept of the political "center". Sandra Burton, journalist and witness in the Aquino-Galman murder case, writes in an article for *America and the World 1986* (*Foreign Affairs*, 1986) that "Aquino's triumph in ousting one of the world's most durable dictators infused that heretofore moribund slice of the ideological spectrum — the political center — with new dynamism." She adds that "this may be the last chance for the political center to make good its promise of a free economy" and recommends that Mrs. Aquino "expand the center over the years ahead to include more of those on the Left and Right," obviously to be achieved through various strategies of attraction and cooperation.

It becomes clear then that the centrist position of President Aquino is only part of the stage-managed US intervention in the Philippines, from the pre-snap election breakfast caucuses at the US Embassy to the implementation of LIC. The Doctrine of the Third Force, or "centrism" as articulated by the Aquino government, is based on terms favorable to the maintenance of "US strategic interests" in the Philippines and continued access to local resources. It is a clear and transparent ideological ploy to lay the ground for the forthcoming talks on the military bases, while Mrs. Aquino continues to build her popularity through personalistic means and to consolidate her state machinery harnessed to the service of American interests.

Manila Standard (May 20, 1987), p. 6.

CULTURAL ISSUES IN THE AQUINO REGIME

February 26, 1989 marks the third anniversary of the EDSA uprising which installed the Aquino government. As later events have shown, this was not a true revolution or break from the previous Marcos dictatorship; instead one is struck by a basic similarity between this government and what preceded it, notwithstanding Pres. Aquino's initial statement that her government would be the opposite of Mr. Marcos', and notwithstanding the much vaunted democratic space which has all but disappeared. We do not need to prove the continuing US control over the economy or cite the increasing number of human rights violations as a result of the Aquino regime's total war. Neither do we need to cite the renewed corruption in the government from the new set of cronies swept into power with Aquino. All this is familiar fare in the daily press.

Because the economy has remained the same and politics is still the traditional jockeying for power and pelf of the elites, many of the present cultural issues have been raised

during the Marcos rule. This is not to say, however, that the Aquino government does not have its own specific character. Indeed, it has, and at the beginning one was struck with the seeming low priority given to culture in contrast with the grandiose schemes of the Marcos government.

What has occurred is rather the extending and intensifying of directions on the economic, political and cultural levels. Of notable significance is the strong hand of the US in the cultural landscape which has more than made up for the weak cultural interests of the present executive. In line with the US's not-so-covert role in culture is the increasing role of the military in the financing and producing of cultural programs as part of the important psywar aspect of LIC. Along with these, the new elites have also been actively engaged in gaining ground lost during the Marcos years. Thus, one of the basic observations in culture today is the reshifting of ownership of the media from the previous Marcos cronies to a new set of favored proprietors, no less aggressive and self-interested. Instead of a wider base for the ownership of media, there has been a shrinking of ownership into monopolies by a few big landlord-compradors. These same new elites which had been marginalized in the Marcos regime have also created cultural projects that would serve as a pretext to further their interests.

A significant cultural phenomenon in the EDSA uprising was an unprecedented use of symbols, both visual and aural. For the occasion itself, these accompanied the dramatis personae on center stage and served to control and direct the energies of the massive crowds. But these symbols were projected to serve ends beyond those days in February. Indeed, a striking feature of the EDSA event was the orchestration and manipulation of symbols, religious or specifically military, within a political context. The principal religious symbol was the image of Our Lady of Fatima which, significantly, was not carried on the shoulders of religious participants, but on those of the leading military figures, then General Ramos and Defense Minister Enrile. The military capitalized on the anti-Soviet "message" of Fatima c

municated by three peasant women in Portugal, which was at the time, together with Spain, one of the most backward European countries. The Fatima image, in fact, became prominently displayed in the Camp Crame office of General Ramos, thereby tying up the religious image with the military, thus enabled to claim a new divinely-sanctioned authority and legitimacy to replace its notoriety in the Marcos regime.

The role of the Church hierarchy headed by Cardinal Sin came to the fore in the EDSA event and in the inaugural mass at the Luneta. Played over and over as MTV, the images accompanied by the song "Magkaisa" showed how close the country got to a new unity of the traditional Church and State as that which existed in the Spanish Colonial Period. Furthermore, this unity conferred on the military a new blessing from the institutional Church which later gave approval to Mrs. Aquino's total war.

Several politico-cultural implications arise from this phenomenon of church-state interrelationship. One is the shedding of the secular definition of the state in order to take on a religious and impliedly divinely-sanctioned character. Another is the disregarding of the religious pluralism existing in the country in Islam, Protestant, and other religions and churches in favor of a dominant majority Church which is that of the traditional Catholic hierarchy. Still another implication is that the Aquino government sought to base the foundation of its legitimacy on religious grounds which are presumed to be unshakeable and without question. By this union, Church and State were meant to constitute a solid structure of authority over the people, so that a fiat of the state — such as that of total war — would also be that of the Church. Doubtless, such a combination was expected to go a long way towards furthering the interests of the new Club Filipino elite and the interests of the United States as well.

Significantly enough, the other dominant symbol and secular counterpart of the Fatima image in the EDSA event was the weapon, particularly the Uzi submachinegun which

first caught public attention at the time and which figured prominently in media and press coverages. Part of the hyped-up emotionalism of EDSA was a perceptible effort to glorify the weapon, and with it came an underlying state militarism. An example is from Denis Gray's coverage for *Malaya* (it is amazing how many foreign correspondents then were covering the event for the dailies): "Singing a prayer and shouldering an Uzi submachinegun, Juan Ponce Enrile cut a dashing figure. Thousands cheered the brave defense minister as he threw the gauntlet before the superior forces of Ferdinand E. Marcos." The ultimate enemy was not, however, Marcos. Even during those tense days, Enrile gave orders to the crowd not to damage the tanks as these would be used in counterinsurgency operations. We note that in the same example, prayer and Uzi are brought together in a common value framework. This coincides neatly with one of the theme songs of EDSA, "Onward, Christian Soldiers" in the spirit of a religious crusade. Along with the other tune, "Mambo Magsaysay," rather curiously resurrected from dusty files of the postwar Fifties, this song could have functioned as a code in a covertly-directed scenario. The meaning of the EDSA event was not only the obvious ousting of Marcos but was the renewal of the military, with the help of the Church, as instant hero, with all its past sins wiped out and given a sorely needed vote of confidence. This was, indeed, a clever stroke, for in a single event, the military could claim the coveted role of having ousted the dictator, thus coopting all the years of the people's anti-Marcos struggle and winning a new "moral ground" for the counterinsurgency war.

If there was any sector which did enjoy a new space opened up for it, then this was the military. This new space was the context for the railroading of vigilante groups, the granting of new privileges and special presidential favors. Into this space rushed in the military's ideological handmaidens, the hordes of US evangelists which have come to preach Cold War rhetoric in order to stem the growing influence of liberationist theology. With these came the

CIA's psywar experts, Singlaub and his ilk, who have laid the ground for Low Intensity Conflict in the grassroots with a black-and-white fundamentalist ideology tied up with religious emotionalism.

In US foreign policy, the Aquino government, along with that of Duarte in El Salvador and Alfonsín in Argentina, was put up as an example of a so-called newly restored democracy. It was widely propagandized in the international media as an exemplar of the Doctrine of the Third Force, a modification of the original Reagan Doctrine which supported all governments no matter how authoritarian and antipeople provided it was "friendly" to US interests and schemed to subvert governments that would take an independent course and shed US tutelage. Instead, the new doctrine or strategy propped up a government which assumed a "centrist" position, rejecting any compromise or coalition with the Left or Right, and projecting itself up as a favorable alternative to the political "extremes", while basically advancing US interests. It is a government which draws its base from the middle class and from the elite groups which lost access to political power in the former regime. In fact, the middle class took center stage in the events surrounding EDSA and in the euphoric climate of the time, many of its members thought (as new books inspired by EDSA convey) that the middle class or "middle forces" held the leading role in social transformation. Cultivating this frame of mind was also part of the Doctrine of the Third Force.

In a less perceptible way, the current theme of "beyond ideology" fitted in perfectly with the same doctrine. Since the Aquino government, which enjoyed a wide (middle class) consensus, was perceived to be centrist and therefore assuming a space above and beyond the forces of the Right and the Left, then it followed, in the perception of her supporters, that art and culture should "transcend" the ideology of the Right and the Left, or any ideology whatsoever. This is tantamount to advancing the idea of a "neutral" culture, of culture beyond the interests of any class or group

or set loose from its moorings in the material conditions of life. This position, which purportedly goes "beyond ideology" is itself deeply mired in ideology since it creates a "false consciousness", ideology in its negative sense of masking and concealing the primary motivations in the productive relations of society.

In line with LIC defined as "total war on the grassroots level," US-sponsored ideological strategies have centered on popular culture and folk religiosity. This track is not new, however. As early as the Fifties, Edward Lansdale, Magsaysay's astute adviser, saw their possibilities in the anti-Huk campaign and used it in the well-known example of the *aswang*. Lansdale continues to be one of the principal figures in the formulation of the LIC doctrine and to this day, vampire tactics are still being used in Mindanao. US groups involved in grassroots programs are the Summer Institute of Linguistics also known as Wycliffe Bible Translators and some remnants of the Peace Corps. Sanctioned by the Department of Education, these groups are allowed to teach the rudiments of English, science, and math to the barrio folk, thereby establishing authority and creating psychological dependence among the people, conditions which greatly facilitate foreign access to important natural resources in the region. Meanwhile, in our current urban experience, a rightwing religious group has been trying to conduct a door-to-door campaign in the Faculty Center, with its American adherents assuming the task of divine messengers come to teach unenlightened Filipino academics about God.

A new and active group is the Unification Church (also called Moonies after Sun Myung Moon of Korea) which has as cultural-religious arm, the Asian Ecumenical Inter-Faith Council or Movement (AEIM), as CAUSA is their political arm. Under the guise of ecumenism, it seeks to formulate an ideological discourse seemingly nationalistic in character because based on popular culture and values but safeguarding US interests in the region. The Asian Ecumenical

Inter-Faith Movement held the Kabuuan conference in February last year. This had the aim of creating a Filipino ideology based on Wholeness and with Freedom, Brotherhood, and Holiness as the key values. Upon closer look, its value framework ties up neatly with what Mark Hagopian in *Ideals and Ideologies of Modern Politics* identified as the basic values of conservative ideology. For one, harmony is the cornerstone of conservatism: it glosses over conflicts as the members of society accept their traditional or assigned roles in the social hierarchy. Likewise, organicism or wholeness is a basic principle which posits that society is an organic whole, the members of which have their particular roles in maintaining the life of the organism. Another principle, traditionalism, which coincides with the present interest of conservative groups in indigenous culture to be channelled along conservative ends, affirms the prevailing order of things and sees to it that whatever changes occur should be absorbed into the system. The same author also identifies clericalism as another cornerstone of the conservative ideology, as it advances religion as the foundation of society and posits the close cooperation or unity of Church and State.

Interestingly enough, this value system also coincides, as though in an orchestrated manner, with the set of values identified as Filipino by the Institute of Philippine Culture. This was later adopted into the World-Bank PRODED textbook scheme for all levels of the educational system to form the base of the Filipino Ideology, a leading cultural concern of the Marcos regime. Again, values such as "harmony" (termed as "conflict-avoidance," SIR or "smooth interpersonal relations," and including patience and long-suffering), "traditionalism" with the stress on one's ethnic roots, "personalism" which implies placing personalities over issues and emphasizes subjective aspects, and supernaturalism which downplays secular and rational values, again find center place. No reevaluation of these values has taken place with the change of government from the Marcos dictatorship to the present dispensation. Apart from expunging passages

glorifying the Marcos rule, the World Bank-funded textbook package, including its values that serve dominant interests and those of foreign monopoly capital to the detriment of the majority of Filipinos, continues unhampered up to the present. Another group engaged in value-formation is the Philippine Institute of Alternative Futures which shares common programs with the Asian Ecumenical Interfaith Council, a Moonie group.

Indeed, the military itself has been active in the area of values. In June 1988, the AFP formed the Church Defense Consultative Conference (CADENCE) to foster cooperation and critical assistance between the Church and the military. With the Peace and Order Councils, the military aims to project the *Pro Deo Et Patria* image by promoting a Christian Values Formation movement spearheaded by the AFP Fellowship and the Word of Joy/Sword of the Spirit Movement of Fr. Herbert Schneider, S.J., earlier exposed by the Christian Science Monitor as a CIA venture.

The AEIM-proposed goal to formulate the Kabuuan spirituality for Filipinos has a number of other aspects discussed in *Pamathalaan: Ang Tipan ng Banal na Ina*, a key text of the AEIM. The first of these is *pamathalaan* or "spiritual governance" in which religion is the primary element which embraces all aspects of life, personal, economic, and political and that institutions, hitherto secular in character, will be redirected towards a religious orientation. In fact, one common observation during the present regime is the proliferation of religious images in government offices and the regular use of public school classrooms for prayer meetings. A degree of coercion is involved when the teachers themselves enjoin their students to attend. Public barangay buildings in plazas also lend themselves readily to born-again evangelists who attract the youth with their lively singing. Everywhere, one becomes aware of a widely networked campaign to direct religious energies along fundamentalist lines and away from the propeople theology of the Basic Christian Communities.

The AEIM "spirituality" likewise assumes a populist aspect which professes concern for the poor masses but which at the same time praises their ascribed virtues of humility and long-suffering. It lays emphasis on the intuitive, unintellectual and nonrational aspects of folk culture. Bringing out the millenarist tendencies in folk religiosity, it advances the Philippines as the future New Jerusalem in its devotion to *Dios Ina* who is also *Inang Filipina*. Here there is an obvious attempt to bring in Cory Aquino under this mythical paradigm. Also part of its mystifying strategy is to promote the EDSA event as a miracle, a script originating from divine hands.

Still on the subject of our traditional cultures, members of the Aquino government have not been remiss in recognizing their rich potentials. This is why a number of departments such as Agriculture and Tourism sponsored an international conference on indigenous cultures last year. But again, it was obvious that there was, as in the Marcos regime, the same exploitative view of our indigenous cultures in a spirit not far removed from turn-of-the-century international expositions in which members of Philippine tribes found themselves as the dehumanized and hapless subjects or exhibit, along with their cultural artifacts. The invitation to the conference was, in fact, a tourist brochure under the general come-on of Fiesta Islands. All in all, the exercise was but a pretext to sell goods, whether traditional arts or not, and more importantly, was planned to boost sagging tourism and ensure a round of occupancy for five-star hotels. Such intransigent blindness and disrespect for traditional ethnic cultures is one of the main points in the campaign for autonomy in the Cordillera region and the Muslim South, because it is in conditions of autonomy that their communities will be better able to safeguard their cultural and artistic traditions from exploitative strategies by the dominant elite.

Indeed, a salient thrust of the cultural programs of the Aquino government is to link its cultural and artistic projects

with tourism and its over-all concept of the *fiesta*. This has been the case since the beginning of the Aquino administration up to the present. In fact, cultural and touristic programs fall under "The Philippines: Fiesta Islands" concept, with each year a festival year. In this context, EDSA is the ultimate *fiesta*, and as the present state activities intend, the *fiesta* that brings together all *fiestas* from all seasons and regions. Since the *fiesta* has become bound up with tourism, folk artistic expressions and rituals become subsumed under a commercial, foreign-tourist oriented program. Painting and other contemporary media are not spared from this general thrust, as the Cultural Center programs show, with art exhibits organized as festivals, especially in the months of February and March to commemorate EDSA and the installation of the Aquino government.

Needless to say, the *fiesta* orientation in culture belongs to the realm of ideology in the same way that EDSA has become the substance of myth. The Aquino government's concept of culture as *fiesta* does not do justice to the people's artistic and cultural expressions but transforms them into meaningless decoration and commodity catering to foreign tourists. Each cultural festival is meant to capture the euphoria of EDSA, to create a perpetual state of mindless euphoria, if that be possible. Even the appellation of "Fiesta Islands", the inspired invention of the Department of Tourism, gives a distorted view of Philippine conditions and projects us to the foreign public as colorful islanders frolicking in the sun, a myth which foreigners as well as ourselves are expected to believe.

The obverse side of the *fiesta* myth is too demanding to be ignored. The Mendiola massacre occurred on the eve of the first anniversary of EDSA. This February again, before marking the third year, the Guimba massacre follows the Lupao massacre in Nueva Ecija. In the past two years, militarization has greatly escalated from the Marcos regime and the phenomena of internal refugees and proliferating vigilante groups absorbed into the CAFGU mark the Aquino government. Yet this February again, there is a renewed

call for an anniversary celebration in the buntings and shrines along EDSA waiting for those who will dance to their music.

The fiercer military onslaughts with bombing and ham-letting Vietnam-style are accompanied in culture by some of the most benighted black-and-white ideological fundamentalism and Col War propaganda in the media, TV in particular. Government agencies issue the most medieval distortions of alternative systems, thus supporting US hegemony in this part of the globe. More than ever is the hand of the military visible in the field of culture. TV series such as *K* and *Banyuhay* have ready access to the war materiel and assistance of the military. As for light entertainment, TV and film media promote the juvenile love interests of syrupy, ego-tripping adolescents.

The Aquino government has also ushered in a new cultural form which originated with the EDSA "Magkaisa" MTV featuring an airy slow motion performance of the dramatis personae at the Luneta mass and the "reconciliation" drama of young fully-cassocked clerics enthusiastically embracing soldiers in fatigue uniform. Government propagandists made several versions of the same while the public was still receptive to their regular repetition. Along the same line, but without the saccharine music, DBP came up with a series of short didactic dramas on the Filipino values to uphold the system identified as the "Filipino way of life." A prominent feature was the white-haired authority figure who delivered the message with appropriate pomposity for an impressive, subliminally threatening effect. Up to the present, there are didactic free-enterprise skits on TV intended to inculcate the virtues of entrepreneurial aggressiveness and efficiency in an economy which remains under US control.

There are other cultural issues in the Aquino regime which would require a lengthy discussion. One is the re-emergence of colonial values, as in National Artist Nick Joaquin's *Culture as History* which celebrates the friar and the conquistador in Philippine history. And while this may not have a demonstrable link to the present dispensation, doubtless, it advances the interests of elite groups by assert-

ing the dominance of the Christian Filipino over all others. The national language issue also cropped up in the Aquino government. The government's language policy is marked by ambiguity and inconsistency, as in the case of formal diplomatic occasions when the chief executive still uses English rather than Filipino in continual concession to foreign, particularly US, state officials. The issue of language raises numerous problems and debates, but these may involve divergent positions in linguistic theory which may be largely a matter of the specific discipline. Suffice it to say that the language policy, as in the case of the university, for instance, must necessarily be accompanied by a strong support system in terms of translation and publication bodies so as to give it substance.

From the cultural issues that emerged in the last three years, the Aquino government does have a particular profile in culture, a profile that is defined by the interests that it serves and one that is contrary to the people's true culture.

LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT: US INTERVENTION IN THE GRASSROOTS

Insurgency and Counterinsurgency

In the Philippine context, "insurgency" was the term used by the American colonial authorities for the Philippine-American War at the turn of the century. This was a resumption of the anticolonial struggle for independence, earlier from Spanish rule, and this time from US colonialism. After the Treaty of Paris in 1898 in which Spain "ceded" the Philippines to the United States, Filipinos who rebelled and took up arms against the new colonial government were labeled "insurgents". As a term, "insurgency" neutralizes or plays down the reality of popular will expressed in the widespread involvement of the population in a people's war, at the same time that the term avoids the connotation of legitimacy that a universal tradition of upheavals against tyrants, foreign rulers, and unjust governments gives to the alternative term "revolution".

As a term used by the United States and its client states, "insurgency" applies to wars for national liberation or people's wars, mostly in the form of guerrilla conflicts, waged against US imperialism and its control over the economic, political, and cultural life of a country. In the Philippines, neocolonial domination has spawned a number of evils: the stunting of indigenous industrial development, the draining of the economy by transnational corporations, the persistence of oppressive relations in the countryside which is the source of raw materials, trade deficits and unequal balance of payments, a huge foreign debt with onerous IMF-World Bank dictates, general poverty with cheap labor as attraction to foreign investment, and the inequitable distribution of wealth in favor of the big landlords and compradors, local agents and facilitators of foreign monopoly capital.

The term "counterinsurgency" is likewise preferred by US policymakers to "counterrevolution" which has historically negative connotations. In the strict sense, counterinsurgency covers the entire range of military operations of the armed forces of the US-backed state launched against the revolutionary masses led by the workers and peasants.

During the Vietnam War, "counterinsurgency" referred to a particular approach which developed in the course of the conflict. In this sense, it is to be distinguished from the traditional Clausewitzian concept of war as essentially a military confrontation, a battle between two armies in which body counts play an important part. The traditional approach defined its goals as capturing and holding territory and annihilating the enemy's main force units through air, sea, and ground operations using superior force and firepower. This point of view was held by traditional army officers, Pentagon bureaucrats and US army units.¹

On the other hand, the new concept which emerged from Vietnam was that of a war as fundamentally a political confrontation between two systems, "democracy" and

"communism". Rather than capturing territory and destroying the larger number of enemy troops, this war "targets the civilian population with a combination of military force, economic pressure, psychological warfare and other means, and attempts to destroy the enemy's political and social structures."² This approach involved the Green Berets and the Marines, together with such agencies as AID and the CIA to carry out various programs, namely, "agricultural development, police training, psychological warfare, paramilitary operations by small units, economic assistance to refugees."³ It was a total packaged approach which entailed "combining military operations with wide-ranging development programs to restructure local societies along lines that could benefit US interests."⁴ It was this second concept that was labeled "counterinsurgency".

The counterinsurgency experts that learned from the Indo-chinese experience revised the traditional approach in the following strategies:

1. Pacification, or the 'hearts and minds' approach, correctly targets *population*, not territory, as the strategic objective.

2. Military escalation is often counterproductive; overkill can win battles but lose wars. As former Vietnamese Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky admitted bitterly, 'You cannot use a streamroller against a shadow.'

3. Counterinsurgency fails where it does not take indigenous culture and history into account; successful operations need solid intelligence about local political, cultural, social and economic conditions.

4. Counterrevolution can only succeed if it is combined with 'nation-building' — the construction of an alternative social system. Nation-building combines 'internal defense' (protection against insurgents) with economic assistance, in order to create a strong security apparatus, a manageable political community and stable national institutions.

5. The United States cannot act alone; in fact, using US combat troops is likely to significantly decrease the

chance of victory. It is ultimately the role of local forces to win their own population. The United States should, however, 'clean up' client forces so that abuses and corruption do not alienate the population from nation-building; and it should control and direct the non-military aspect of the war.

6. The United States needs regional strategies to deal with regional conflicts. It must deny the enemy political and military sanctuary in neighboring theaters, while 'going to the source' of the regional conflict. It cannot allow itself to become bogged down in fighting on one subsidiary front while the enemy fights on several — an argument shared by analysts of conventional warfare.

7. The US military establishment must overcome its own prejudices against unconventional, 'unmilitary' warfare; it must achieve greater coordination among the branches of the service as well as with civilian intelligence, aid, and development agencies.

8. This kind of warfare must seek to win the support of the US population, as well as the foreign target population."⁵

These counterinsurgency strategies played an important part in the formulation of the doctrine of Low Intensity Conflict.

Low Intensity Conflict (LIC)

After the US defeat in Vietnam, prominent rightwing US policymakers, including Jeane Kirkpatrick and Fred Ickle, founded the Committee on the Present Danger in order to maintain a level of militancy on the part of the American public to what they perceived as a continuing threat to US interests in the context of the New Cold War. Military and intelligence experts flocked to Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) under the directorship of Ray S. Cline, formerly deputy director of the CIA, and to the National Strategy

Information Center (NSIC). These centers became the hubs of rightist policy for imperialist wars. The policymakers declared that, rather than a build-up of conventional and nuclear forces, US national security required "the development of a new capability and an effective strategy for fighting revolutionary forces" in the Third World.⁶ Their recommendations led to the formulation of LIC which is the post-Vietnam counterinsurgency doctrine.

Ray S. Cline traces Low Intensity Conflict to the early Cold War period in 1948. He cites that in order to counter what he called the "external aggression" of the USSR, the Marshall Plan was adopted to give economic incentives to the countries of Western Europe while a substantial American security force remained in place ostensibly to maintain security but more to forestall their leaving the US sphere of influence and taking an independent course. Focusing on the term in particular, Cline writes in retrospect: "Between economic assistance and military protection, a middle zone of low intensity conflict short of war arose. This was the zone in which the US would use covert political and psychological efforts to counter Soviet influence, supplementing US diplomatic efforts by assisting moderate non-communist groups."⁷

The LIC doctrine owes a debt to British counterinsurgency experience in Kenya and Malaysia after the Second World War. Particularly influential was British Colonel Frank Kitson's 1971 study entitled "Low-Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, and Peacekeeping" which became a field manual for British commanders in Northern Ireland.⁸

The theory of LIC was further developed in the Eighties. The 1981 US Army Field Manual 100-20 entitled "Low Intensity Conflict" presented LIC as an expression of the "Internal Defense and Development" (IDAD) theory of counterinsurgency which evolved since the Sixties and which emphasized the organization of pacification and civic action campaigns.⁹ In 1984, a US Department of Defense Report entitled "Low Intensity Conflict in the 1980s: Policy Recommendations for the United States" identified three major

categories of action: 1) counterinsurgency 2) assisting anti-communist insurgency, and 3) counterterrorism.¹⁰

Also in 1984, the Special Warfare Advisory Group presented its recommendations on LIC to the US Department of Defense. Formed by Fred Ickle, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, the group consists of Edward Lansdale, former head of "pacification" campaigns in the Philippines and South Vietnam; Gen. John Singlaub, chief of Joint Unconventional Task Force in Vietnam and head of the World Anti-Communist League; Generals Aderholt and Gorman; Mr. Andy Messing of the National Defense Council; Ambassador to El Salvador Thomas Pickering; and Edward Luttwak, associate of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. This group urged the US government to move away from conventional warfare toward more civic action, psychological warfare, and small unit operations, as well as to make increased use of surrogate forces and build "surrogate infrastructures" to combat insurgency.¹¹ Along the same line, Heritage Foundation, a New Right think tank, sponsored and publicized a seminar in January 1986 entitled "How to Roll Back the Soviet Empire through Low Intensity Warfare."¹² A Low Intensity Center has been created in the Department of Joint and Combined Operations at Fort Leavenworth, thus proving the institutionalization of LIC in the US military.

The 1985 Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 522-44 entitled "US Army Operational Concept for LIC" defines LIC as "a limited political-military struggle to achieve political, social, economic, or psychological objectives. It is often protracted and ranges from diplomatic, economic, and psycho-social pressures through terrorism and insurgency. Low Intensity Conflict is generally confined to a geographic area and is often characterized by constraints in the weaponry, tactics, and levels of violence."¹³

The term "low intensity conflict" comes from its place in the "intensity spectrum" of warfare which ascends from "civil disorders, through classical wars to nuclear holocaust."¹⁴ But Col. John Waghelstein, commander of the

US Army Seventh Special Forces and one of the architects of LIC, warns that the term LIC is misleading as it may lead people to believe that it is a scaled-down version of conventional warfare or a preliminary to a real conflict, for it describes the level of violence strictly from the military point of view, when, in fact, it involves "political, economic and psychological warfare, with the military being a distant fourth in many cases."¹⁵ Summing it up, Waghelstein has described LIC as "total war at the grassroots level."¹⁶

Low Intensity Conflict is sweeping through the countries of Central America described as a "laboratory" for the study of LIC and through the Philippines in the US-Aquino regime.

Features of Low Intensity Conflict

Within the context of the Cold War and the Reagan Doctrine which posits the antagonistic confrontation of two systems, "democracy" and "communism", the LIC is a proxy war in which surrogate forces, that is, the armed forces of the country fighting insurgency, does the work for the US Army in protecting American interests and maintaining US hegemony in the Third World. This does not mean, however, that the US in opting for a low profile will intervene only minimally, for, in fact, its influence in LIC is even more pervasive and insidious. While direct US military intervention is avoided as being "counter-productive", US Army Majors Donald Morelli and Michael Ferguson warn that LIC does not discount the possibility of US forces conducting tactical operations in the low intensity arena: "the direct assistance of the US may be required, and planning for that eventuality must be continuous and thorough. He admits, however, that if US forces are committed to combat in a low intensity situation, the US has lost the strategic initiative."¹⁷ In this connection, Dr. Sam Sarkesian emphasizes that "it is essential that once the United States is involved, it adopts a policy and posture that does not 'Americanize' the conflict. The prime emphasis needs to be

placed on maintaining the autonomy of the existing system. Among other things, this means that political-military operations that are likely to project the United States into a dominant role over the existing system must be avoided."¹⁸

In the nature of Low Intensity Conflict is its synergistic approach which uses combined pressure and in which "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts" and "each facet of assault - economic, political, military, or psychological has a distinctive multiplier effect on the other fronts."¹⁹ The war in the field is only one aspect of LIC. As Lewis Tambs, US Ambassador to Costa Rica pointed out, there is also the battle in the media and that conducted in the US administration in Washington to win full endorsement and support for LIC in the Third World.²⁰

This multipronged and integrated approach necessitates a high degree of interagency coordination between the military and civilian institutions, and between the public and private sectors as a whole, resulting in a blurring of the border between civilian and military. Thus, LIC involves 1) integrating military science with all the other aspects of government policy, both in the US and in the target country; 2) achieving new levels of interagency coordination as between the CIA and AID and the military, or between the Church, educational institutions and the military in the target country; 3) securing the agreement and cooperation of third party countries, such as Israel, Taiwan, and South Korea to supply hardware and training to governments fighting insurgency; and 4) enlisting the ideological convictions and resources of the private sector to aid the efforts of the US government in protecting its strategic interests in the Third World.²¹

Salient to the definition of LIC is its character as a war on all fronts. It emphasizes psychological warfare and integrates the economic, socio-cultural, and political with the military counterinsurgency operations. LIC is to wage war on the economic, psychological, social, and cultural fronts. Because of this, LIC has a strong ideological slant, that is, anti-

communist orientation. A former US military adviser in San Salvador betrayed the LIC orientation in his statement that "the only territory worth fighting for in Central America is the six inches between a campesino's ears."²² Anti-communist propaganda is conducted in the field by armed propaganda teams and through radio propaganda diatribes and attacks. Psychological operations, according to the 1981 US Army Field Manual on LIC, are carried out in order to "make population and resource control measures more acceptable to the population."²³ Such measures would include hamletting, food blockades, and checkpoints, towards which psywar would aim to render the people more cooperative and docile. This jibes with the LIC principle that victory is not measured by force of arms, but by the avoidance of certain outcomes, or by attitudinal change in a target group."²⁴

On the economic front, civic operations include giving economic assistance and incentives (the "carrot" in the "carrot-and-stick" approach) to blockading food supplies for the rebels or for the guerrilla zone as a whole. Humanitarian aid, such as food and medicine (also called non-lethal supplies), is given with an eye to its propaganda value in advancing US objectives, as specifically, it creates a good image for the armed forces. In fact, an Office of Humanitarian Assistance was created within the Pentagon and Economic Support Funds (ESF) and other AID funds are used for civic action projects administered by the national armies and coordinated by US military advisers.²⁵

Much of economic aid in LIC falls under military civic action activities, jointly called "internal development" or even "nation building". According to Barry, the three basic objectives of civic action are: 1) to improve the public image of the military, 2) to improve rural socio-economic conditions and thereby reduce leftist insurgency, and 3) to encourage the formation of strong national institutions capable of withstanding internal revolutionary challenges ("nation-building").²⁶ Among these activities are immunization and

medical examination campaigns, road construction, food and clothing distribution, and the sponsoring of sports events and entertainment.

On the whole, rightist regimes and interest groups representing business sectors are frequent collaborators in the suppression of economic nationalists and radical leaders of unions and mass organizations. The American Chamber of Commerce in the target country may influence the government in the selection of the labor minister which would be one sympathetic to transnational corporations. At the same time, the Baker Plan which pursued Reagan's privatization campaign grants loans as incentives to countries which present a "viable" economic program that hews along the lines of free enterprise in favor of US monopoly capital. In general, the objective in the economic front is to use a combination of calibrated pressures and incentives towards the putting in place of economic surrogate infrastructures that will guarantee the country's place in the so-called Free World of US hegemony. Socio-economic programs or reforms are not undertaken in order to benefit the people but instead to undercut popular sympathy for the insurgents.

On the political front, US pressure is brought to bear on the target country through the traditional channels of diplomacy, including regular visitations to observe and proffer advice, and even more, through covert CIA manipulation. The electoral process is often the site of intensive action and intervention. Ray S. Cline, one of the architects of LIC, enumerated a number of measures used in influencing the outcome of elections: 1) teaching American electoral techniques through American election "observers", 2) providing money for local anticommunist or noncommunist political groups, 3) countering communist propaganda, and 4) getting out the vote. In particular, he cites the case of Italy which held elections in 1948 with a strong communist party. US intervention was in the form of giving financial and technical assistance to the noncommunist parties, particularly the Christian Democrats, and exerting efforts to split the

progressive bloc.²⁷ Of paramount importance in the political front is the long-term strategy of shaping and manipulating puppet leaders. Angelo Codevilla in a CIA colloquium on Covert Action neatly summed up the process of US intervention: "If one nation has built clandestine networks in another country to influence its decisions and exercises that influence repeatedly, then the nation will be able to change or modify the character of the said country's political landscape."²⁸

In the new Doctrine of the Third Force, which complements the original Reagan Doctrine, the US government is favorable to a government that takes a "centrist" position between the forces of the Left and the Right — a position that suits LIC well because of its humanitarian guise while it promotes US interests. In fact, this is the direction the US would like the so-called restored democracies to take, with the US monitoring their political development. The LIC also emphasizes decentralization of the government which means higher visibility at the grassroots. Likewise, it is in the context of the LIC that any negotiations with insurgents must be viewed: as opportunity for government propaganda and political advantage.

On the cultural front, LIC involves, as part of its psychological operations, the propagation and intensification of public interest in occult religions, pseudooriental philosophies, and superstition as nonrational ideologies to subvert and to counter the advances in people's culture with its scientific outlook. The US realizes the importance of knowing the indigenous culture and traditions of the "target country" in order to be able to work from these in the manipulating of symbols and cultural forms, as well as in adapting their counterrevolutionary propaganda to Third World societies. Cultural operations involve swamping the country with propaganda disseminating American values through the radio, television, and press in order to gear the people's tastes, values and attitudes to the interests

of US monopoly capital.

Basically, this propaganda involves an entire discourse with an indoctrinational emphasis upon linking corporate capitalism or "free enterprise" with liberty and identifying communism with Satanic totalitarianism. Visiting "cultural" groups, such as the Children of God, target adolescents with their growing sex drives to destroy the cultural identity and moral fabric of the country and insidiously instill anti-communist fanaticism. Waves of fundamentalist preachers come to the Third World to trumpet their counterrevolutionary diatribes in the guise of biblical wisdom and to prey on the impoverished masses by "healing" sessions. It is a common fact that the CIA makes use of religion, especially with the ready cooperation of a conservative church hierarchy, to lend legitimacy to the state's "total war".

Added to this is a captive educational system implementing World Bank-financed educational projects, such as textbooks and an academic community dependent on foreign grants and scholarships. Other forms of intervention in culture include cultural exchanges, the Peace Corps, and subsidy of antiradical community development projects and organizations. Miles Wolpin, in his study entitled *Military Aid and Counterrevolution in the Third World* points out that these forms serve to diminish radical potential by "mobilizing institutional and mass attitudinal bias" against aspiring counterelites in growing political mass organizations. Thus, in the language of US intervention, the "penetrated society" may exhibit fewer radical provocations to an increasingly rightist military" backing a puppet regime.²⁹ In accordance with the grassroots character of LIC, the planners divide the population into three categories: 1) insurgents, 2) rearguard for insurgents, and 3) targets to be won.³⁰ The "dirty" character of the war lies in the fact that it "penetrates into homes, families, and the entire fabric of grassroots social relations."³¹

In this context, the role of the CIA is of central importance, especially in the high number of covert actions and

clandestine operations in LIC. The Reagan government considerably expanded the CIA and had frequent recourse to CIA covert funding and intervention to circumvent congressional restrictions. In the colloquium on Covert Action published by the National Strategy Information Center, Ray S. Cline emphasized that it is not secrecy *per se*, that is important, whether it be money passed or influence built up by whatever methods, but its not being traceable or attributable to the US government.³²

High on the list of CIA methods is disinformation, a psywar device, especially when the source is concealed. Angelo Codevilla in the same colloquium describes its use: "Information from a dissimulated source can have even more direct effects by conveying information to a political leader that another leader, faction or state is about to do something, or by providing an explanation for why the other party did something. By supplying such information, one can trigger the leader's reaction, or confirm him in his plans, or induce him to alter them."³³ Codevilla also points out that the "truth or falsity of the information does not necessarily affect its usefulness. Whether true or false, information can calm or influence factional disputes, raise or lower confidence, or raise or lower the stock of an official. The key question is 'How will it affect the recipient?'"³⁴ Violence and assassination are handy CIA tools as Codevilla admits: "How many government, business, labor, and professional leaders have been killed to help or hinder political developments! Violence is all the more effective politically if its perpetrators cannot be linked directly on whose behalf they act. Without such linkage, the target public cannot focus its anger on something outside itself, and may turn in upon itself. To the extent that a country which fosters political violence in another does so covertly, it escapes retaliation. The amount of secrecy required to avoid retaliation from a target country decreases along with the target country's power. For the utterly weak, no pretense is needed."³⁵

In 1983, the CIA issued a handbook entitled *Psychological*

Operations in Guerrilla Warfare to serve as a guide for the US-backed *contras* generously funded to harass and overthrow the Sandinista government of Nicaragua. Among its recommendations are recruiting professional criminals to infiltrate demonstrations and sending shock troops to march behind unsuspecting demonstrators. It encourages the torture and assassination of "soft targets" such as teachers, health workers, and agricultural technicians to create the impression of *contra* strength and government weakness. In line with the doctrine of LIC, the manual urges the *contras* to mirror the successful tactics of guerrilla warfare: "Combat actions are not the key to victory in guerrilla effort. . . every member of the struggle should know that his political mission is as important as his tactical mission." Civil programs are to be conducted in order to interact with the masses: "Our object is to build close identification with the people, working side by side, with peasants in the countryside, building, fishing, repairing, etc. . ." ³⁶

A top official of the US State Department admitted that a trademark of the Reagan administration was that it effectively substituted covert action for foreign policy.³⁷ Instances of covert and clandestine action exceed sixty in only six years and these range from funneling money to political forces opposing the government of Mauritius, destabilizing Libya's Qaddafi, bankrolling hundreds of millions in aid for Afghan rebels, to mining Nicaragua's harbors. Facing a congressional ban on CIA-backing of the *contras* in 1984, Reagan resorted increasingly to the privatization of intelligence and approved a secret plan to replace CIA funds with assistance from private citizens and US allies like Israel. For this scheme the White House handpicked retired Major Gen. John Singlaub as the chief fund-raising contact and coordinator for this campaign which has been overseen by the National Security Council.³⁸ The CIA itself has adopted the policy of privatizing the supply of weapons, advisers, and aid by enlisting private citizens from the US and other countries. "Cut-outs" consisting of retired generals

and other military officers, CIA pilots, and new companies not formally linked with the government to use as fronts for US covert missions make up a back-channel network.³⁹ "Sheep-dipping" is a CIA tactic in which a military officer temporarily sheds his military status in the course of a foreign mission in order to enjoy greater flexibility of movement.

The expansion of the intelligence arm of the military is well within the program of the LIC. As Col. John Waghelstein, in his talk at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C. on January 16, 1985, put it categorically: "In LIC there are three important words to remember, and they are intelligence, intelligence, and intelligence. The campesino must have confidence that there is a better deal if he goes with us, and that he won't be molested if he walks in with information."⁴⁰ Thus, along with the unprecedented expansion of CIA operations in the United States and all over the world are the coordinated local efforts to put up a civilian spy network in the contested countries of the Third World.

In the strict implementation of LIC, the main task of the indigenous military forces is to hold the insurgent forces at bay and to neutralize their social structures, while the US through various forms of intervention, creates surrogate counterrevolutionary institutions -- economic, political, and social -- for the region.⁴¹ This is different from the war of conventional escalation of firepower and combat troops in the conquest of territory and the annihilation of the enemy. By not directly committing its troops, the US spares its own human resources, avoids untenable moral and ethical positions, and is able to operate in a covert but more effective manner while the reactionary armies of client states do the dirty work and take the physical risks.

Instead of sending its own troops and committing ground forces in a combat role (an eventuality which is not entirely precluded, however), the US government is engaged in developing, expanding, and improving forces specially trained

for fighting in the Third World. These are the Special Operations Forces, the elite commando units trained for guerrilla war, covert operations, and counterterrorism. Their skills include "underwater demolition, sabotage, use of foreign weapons, escape, evasion, intelligence gathering, interrogation, communications, engineering, psychological operations, and civil affairs."⁴² The Special Operations Forces are sent to the Third World in military training teams and are engaged in training the local military in counterinsurgency. The US Army's SOF is divided into six groups: the Vietnam Green Berets now functioning as advisers; Rangers known for assault skills; Civil Affairs Specialists for training armies in "projects useful to the local population which will serve to enhance the standing of military forces"; Psychological Operations Troops of propaganda specialists; Delta Force, a super secret unit which is the main element of the US counterinsurgency force, helped by Task Force 160, another top secret unit which is the main element of the US counter-support to Delta and other units. Navy SOF called Seals conduct beach, coastal and river reconnaissance prior to combat, while the air force has its own SOF troops.⁴³ The two countries mentioned as the most likely candidates for SOF are El Salvador and the Philippines.⁴⁴

In the target country, LIC encourages the creation of paramilitary and armed civilian units which are to be justified as spontaneous and voluntary organizations for self-defense against "terrorists". These units which raise the level of terror in both urban and rural areas function as death squads, targeting individuals and making a show of strength, as well as operate as spies in intelligence-gathering activities in the grassroots communities. The use of paramilitary forces and civilian agents serves to displace military responsibility whenever convenient. The army likewise undergoes a "decentralization" from a "barracks army" to a mobile field army.

Military hardware in LIC is mostly low-tech, but combined with high-tech surveillance devices and "anti-terrorist" equip-

ment. The "low-tech" category can include crude and primitive weapons such as bolos for hacking and chopping, spears, darts, blowguns, and slingshots. Along with these is the use of air assets, such as helicopter gunships that are part of US military aid and are used purportedly for the transport of troops, for increased mobility, and for the evacuation of wounded soldiers. Aside from their essentially aggressive function, they are used as psychological "deterrents", discouraging the massing of revolutionary troops on the ground.

Military strategy in LIC is directed towards the isolation of the guerrillas from the civilian population, the denial of external support, and the delegitimization of guerrilla mass movements to the point that they cease to be a political alternative to the existing order. Or as Dr. Sam Sarkesian put it: "The enemy's political-social structure must be penetrated, key leaders must be identified and captured or eliminated, and the political and psychological instruments of the revolution must be destroyed. This strategy is not likely to be in accord with democratic norms or compatible with conventional military posture."⁴⁵ Separating the insurgents from the civilian population is carried out by hamletting and food blockades. Violence is selective in terms of the assassination of identified personalities, at the same time that it effectively terrorizes the population. This "selectivity" of violence gives room for the state's hypocritical concern for human rights interpreted as separating the insurgents and killing them with least damage to the civilians. Other military functions include hampering food production in guerrilla zones, gathering intelligence, and boosting troop morale through war maneuvers.

While LIC generally avoids high levels of violence, Col. Rod Paschall warns that "the new doctrine writers should not be constrained by a restrictive definition, particularly one that precludes advocacy of offensive, mid-intensity ground operations."⁴⁶ He adds that "to keep an Asian-style insurgent within the bounds of LIC is to attempt the impossible" because of the brilliant Asian tradition in guerrilla

war. Paschall emphasizes the necessity of conducting offensive ground operations at the same time that the "host country" solves its problem with its own manpower with minimum visible US military involvement, along with programs in population control and political action.

Finally, LIC has its own vocabulary. The terms of war and intervention conceal their deadly and inhuman meaning through euphemism and objective distancing. For instance, its jargon often draws from medical science; thus, a violent act may be described as a "surgical operation" to "excise" a malignant growth. Seemingly neutral terms mask military connotations. "Community relations programs" refer to armed forces' participation in public events. "Pacification" is used to refer to "attempts to isolate rural guerrillas from their bases of popular support, supplies, and intelligence."⁴⁷ "Peacetime contingency operations" means "politically sensitive military operations normally characterized by the short term rapid projection or employment of forces in conditions short of conventional war, e.g. strike, raid, rescue, warfare, and intelligence operations," and "nation-building" refers to "military efforts to create political, economic and social structures" to counter revolutionary alternatives.⁴⁸

From these strategies aimed towards the advancement of US interests all over the globe, and particularly in the Third World where struggles for national liberation are taking place, it becomes easy to contextualize the statement of Sam Sarkesian, an influential LIC theorist, that "the public must understand that low intensity conflicts do not conform to democratic notions. Survival is the ultimate morality."⁴⁹ In LIC is found the heart of darkness of US imperialism.

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3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
7. Ray S. Cline, "The Future of U.S. Foreign Intelligence Operations". *The U.S. in the 1980s* (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison and Wesley Publishing, Co., 1980), p. 258.
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9. "A Plan of War for Central America," *Resource Center Bulletin*, p. 2.
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12. Kevin J. Kelley, "Reagan Tries Counterrevolution without Frontiers", pp. 5-6.
13. "A Plan of War. . ." *op. cit.*, p. 2.
14. Sara Miles, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
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16. *Ibid.*
17. Morelli and Ferguson, "Low Intensity Conflict, An Operational Perspective," p. 7. Quoted in Miles, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
18. Dr. Sam C. Sarkesian, "Low Intensity Conflict: Concepts, Principles, and Policy Guidelines" *Air University Review* (January-February 1985), p. 5.
19. Miles, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
20. Lewis A. Tambs and Lt. Com. Frank Aker, "Shattering the Vietnam Syndrome: A Scenario for Success in El Salvador" (unpublished ms, 1983), p. 20. Quoted in Miles, *op. cit.* p. 23.
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24. Quoted in Miles, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
25. "A Plan of War. . .", p. 4.
26. Tom Barry, *Low Intensity Conflict: The Battlefield in Central America*. The Resource Center. p. 37.
27. Roy S. Cline, *op. cit.*, p. 259.
28. Roy Godson, ed. *Covert Action, Intelligence Requirements for the 1980s* (Washington, D.C.: National Strategy Information Center, 1981).
29. Miles D. Wolpin, *Military Aid and Counterrevolution in the Third World*, Studies in International Relations and Foreign Policy (Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath and Company, 1972), p. 153.
30. Miles, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
31. *Ibid.* p. 45.

32. Godson, ed. *op. cit.*,
33. *Ibid.*
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*
36. *Psychological Operations in Guerrilla Warfare*. U.S. Army. Handbook FM 95 - 1A Guerrilla War Manual. Special supplement to *Soldier of Fortune* (February 1985). Also published by Vintage Books, New York, 1985.
37. Steven Emerson, "How White House built a 'Black Ops' fund," *U.S. News and World Report* (December 8, 1986), p. 33.
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39. Emerson, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23.
40. William L. Chaze, "Inside the Shadow Network", *U.S. News and World Report* (December 15, 1986), p.30.
41. Quoted in Sara Miles, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
42. "The Dirty Job Specialists", *South* (October 1985), p. 40.
43. Stephen D. Goose, "Target: Marxism", *South* (October 1985), p. 41.
44. Sara Miles, *op. cit.*, p. 25.
45. Sarkesian, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
46. Rod Paschall, "LIC: Who Needs It?" *Parameters, Journal of the U.S. Army War College* (Autumn 1985), p. 44.
47. Tom Barry, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
49. Sarkesian, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

THE COVERT PRESENCE

While all countries chart a foreign policy that will enable them to function and participate effectively on the level of geopolitics, it is an obvious fact that United States foreign policy has been marked by aggressive interventionism. Diplomacy which is commonly understood to facilitate movements of exchange in trade, industry, technology, and culture towards the end of fostering mutual understanding and friendly relations equally beneficial to the countries involved, has meant, in terms of American foreign relations, the unrelenting assertion of the supremacy of US interests pursued internationally with a single-minded determination over and above the interests of other sovereign nations. This overweening affirmation of superpower dominance — which ultimately betrays underlying and deep-rooted attitudes of prejudice towards other societies and cultures, with an underestimation of their capacities for independence and self-governance — blinds the United States to the national characteristics, needs, and legitimate aspirations of other

countries and results everywhere in social warping and distortion manifested in forms of ignorance, fanaticism and servility. It is clear that the United States government regards the countries of Latin America and Asia, mostly small and struggling, as free ground to manipulate to its will bolstered by its capability to use huge material resources for reward and coercion.

While US intervention in our national life has been a fact since our struggle for independence at the turn of the century and its "granting" in 1946 on the condition of parity rights, and has, since then, always existed as an underlying factor in our national politics, US presence has become increasingly persistent with its monitoring of the Aquino government. The US, with its stream of emissaries, seems to be constantly watching over President Aquino's shoulder and at the same time assessing the potentials of other interested parties to the leadership, while it is ready to align these forces in a manner that will best suit American interests.

At this point, every statement from the US government cannot be taken at face value alone. In this carrot-and-stick diplomacy, when the US sends messages of support to Mrs. Aquino whose large popularity and potential manipulability they bank on, one cannot just say "well and good," but must realize that such statements of support implicitly aim to establish a condition of client-dependence on the part of Mrs. Aquino who, in response, is expected to turn more to the US as her protector and benefactor. These exploit the weakness of the Aquino government at a time that the President is threatened by rightist coups and the US can readily assume the role of her powerful backer as long as she compensates by showing increasing docility to its tutelage.

Indeed, US policy in the Philippines has charged the political arena into a tense game of moves and countermoves in which an important part is interpreting statements and signals from all sides and getting beneath their manifest meanings to their deeper significations that trigger a desired response or course of action. It is also important to note

that the US government is not to be seen only as Reagan or Bush and his immediate *dramatis personae*, but as an entire network consisting of the American Chamber of Commerce and Wall Street, the IMF-World Bank, the military-industrial complex, the Rockefeller-Ford foundations, Jerry Falwell and his evangelists, the CIA, the *Commentary* journal, etc. In a study of the current situation, one becomes aware of the shifting lines of force as on a large magnetic field moved by unseen hands, of pressures and counterpressures, actions and responses occurring simultaneously on two levels, the local and the international, in the field of American policy in the Philippines. It is also not surprising that in this atmosphere of insistent American presence, the US government would find it necessary to operate on two levels, that of conventional and open diplomacy as in official visits and communications, and that of covert action.

That covert action as a course of American foreign policy is fast gaining in importance, even prominence, is acknowledged in a recent series of publications entitled *Intelligence Requirements for the 1980s* (National Strategy Information Center, Washington, D.C., 1981) which resulted from a December 1980 colloquium convened by the Consortium for the Study of Intelligence. The fourth book of the series subtitled *Covert Action* and edited by Roy Godson states in the introduction that the colloquium "examined the logical and historical relationship of covert activities and foreign policy, the record and style of American and Soviet activities, and the factors required to provide the US with an effective option, for covert activities in the 1980s." Participating in this colloquium were over sixty academics — indicating the influential role of the academe in this area — current and former intelligence practitioners from the US and abroad, and Congressional specialists in intelligence. It is particularly interesting to note that the participants from the academe in this colloquium on covert action, clearly a component of the CIA, include Dr. Samuel P. Huntington, Professor of Government at Harvard University and widely known for his comprehensive book, *Political Order in Changing*

Societies, and cofounder of *Foreign Policy*, a journal published by the familiar Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Another participant from the academe is Dr. Ray S. Cline. Of even greater interest is the fact that the latter, Dr. Ray S. Cline was in Manila in late 1986 in a *sub rosa* visit that almost escaped the eagle eyes of the media. Cline, with some others, was here at the height of the exposé of the aborted coup codenamed "God Save the Queen" and supposed to have been plotted by some disgruntled military men against certain officials of the Aquino government. In Dr. Cline's company were retired General Singlaub, former deputy chief of the CIA and said to be president of the World Anti-Communist League founded in Taipei in 1967 and widely believed to be responsible for organizing the mercenary *contras* now fighting the Sandinista government in Nicaragua; retired General Sweitzer, also of the CIA and "troubleshooter" in Southeast Asia; a certain William Garrett of the US State Department, with some others unidentified. The *Tribune* (Nov. 14, 1986) reports that Messrs. Singlaub, Sweitzer, and Garrett came into the country under assumed names and checked in at the Holiday Inn on Roxas Boulevard. The confidential nature of their visit was borne out by the fact that a check made by the *Tribune* at the Bureau of Immigration at the Manila International Airport, the US Embassy, and the Joint US Military Advisory Group failed to confirm the presence of the three in Manila. As for Dr. Ray S. Cline (curiously enough his name in the local media was spelled or misspelled as Roy Klein), he was simply identified as a professor of Georgetown University, member of the White House think tank and representing conservative right-wing sentiments of Republican leaders in Washington. But in the book on *Covert Action*, he is registered as Dr. Ray S. Cline, and more specifically identified as Executive Director of Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and former Deputy Director of the CIA. The CSIS published a book in 1984 entitled *Strategic*

Requirements for the Army to the Year 2000 containing the strategy of "Low Intensity Conflict."

According to news reports, these elusive gentlemen held a meeting on Friday, November 7, at Camp Aguinaldo with Minister Enrile and General Ramos at the same time that foreign and local reporters were at Camp Crame attending the press conference of twice-renegade Victor Corpus. The *Tribune* reporter cited a source who allegedly said that "the timing of the meeting was not accidental."

It thus becomes a matter of considerable importance to know the thinking of these recent visitors and recipients of the much-vaunted Filipino hospitality. The book, *Intelligence Requirements for the 1980s* provides more than a clue. Its preface written by Frank R. Barnett, President of the National Strategy Information Center, begins with the following paragraph: "From time immemorial, nations have sought to affect one another's internal affairs, if not by the egregious display of cannon, then by royal marriages or the casuistry of envoys. Sometimes they resort to open threats and blandishments of foreign aid with strings, both visible and otherwise. In the era of mass media, disinformation has proved a major weapons system. Especially when the stakes are high, statesmen seek secretly to alter subtly the balance of the political forces within a rival state or even to suborn political violence."

Barnett continues to deplore the negative connotations of the term "covert action" as referring to "black propaganda" and other clandestine attempts to exert influence on other countries and he proposes that the term be changed to the more palatable and neutral sounding "transnational politics." He also advocates that "covert action" be integrated into US overall policy and the bureaucratic structure in order for it to make a "synergistic impact" with forms of "conventional" diplomacy such as "open propaganda, exchange programs, or the visit of a carrier to neutral ports." He hastens to assure that "clandestine acts need

not be *beastly*" (which implies that they could well be so) and that, indeed, many forms of "covert operations" are "non-violent and as routine — and as benign — as providing advice and funds to politicians, labor leaders, and editors." The preface is followed by an introduction by Roy Godson who defines "covert action" as "the attempt by the government to influence events in another state or territory without revealing its involvement."

Dr. Ray S. Cline, as discussant to the paper by Vernon A. Walters, goes even further when he stresses that it is not only the secrecy *per se* of the action or operation involved that is important, whether it be money passed or influence built up by whatever methods, but also and even more so, its not being traceable or attributable to the US government. He writes: "In 1952, we coined the word 'covert' to mean not 'clandestine' because everybody can see what is happening, but rather to refer to something that could not be proved to be coming from the US government." For this reason, US covert action depends for a great part of its success on the cooperation of local political officials and their relatives, professors, journalists and mediamen, labor leaders, and, of course, deep penetration agents. Likewise, for Cline, covert action is not a last resort but must be a strategic part of the weapons or means available to the government. Being an academic, he also stresses that the values of American society be taught better in universities and disseminated to the people of other countries.

Nevertheless, the participants of the colloquium have to cope with a nagging sense of moral doubt as they feel that they must respond defensively to charges of the essential illegitimacy of covert action. It is noted, for one, that the uncertainty of the Watergate years from 1972 to 1975 which ended in the impeachment of President Nixon because of illegal covert operations within his own government, led to a general distaste for covert action as an instrument of policy. Angelo Codevilla, professional staff member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence cites the argument that "such interference is inappropriate for democracies" but

counters this with the view that "democracy as a system neither necessarily deprives a government of executive powers capable of engaging in subversion abroad nor does it doom a people to being subverted by those it has engaged to subvert others." While he recognizes the inappropriateness for democracies to try to subvert other democracies because in such governments "power resides in popular opinion," the choice may be justified "if the subversive act is instituted to bolster a democratic process which is already being subverted from another quarter." Professor Huntington, on his part, cites the "Soviet threat" as constituting part of the legitimacy of covert action. Many of the participants such as Adda Bozeman and Codevilla cite precedents in world history to provide covert action with the underpinnings of legitimacy.

Yet, there are indications that outside this colloquium the debate continues. Cyrus Vance, US Secretary of State from 1977 to 1980, writing in the journal *Foreign Policy* (Summer 1986) strongly advances the belief that the Reagan Doctrine which commits the US to supporting anticommunist movements wherever they arise, by means overt or covert, "blinds policymakers to the principles of respect for national territorial sovereignty and nonintervention — cornerstones of international order." For his part, Stephen Solarz, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the Foreign House Committee and a frequent visitor to Manila, stresses the importance of covert operations since in the Reagan government "there now exists congressional mechanisms for overseeing intelligence activities to ensure an adequate balance between secrecy and accountability."

In a revealing statement, he declares, in his article "When to Intervene," also in the same issue of *Foreign Policy* that "although it is important for the US to promote democracy and stem the spread of communist ideology, ideological objectives must not be the primary, let alone sole consideration behind US insurgency policy. The *determining criterion should be US national interests in each particular case*" (italics

mine) and that it is in this context that the debate on intervention must take place, "addressing specifics rather than abstractions and realities instead of doctrines."

Codevilla discusses different modes of operation and means employed in covert action. One typical mode is disinformation: "Information from a dissimulated source can have even more direct effects by conveying information to a political leader that another leader, faction, or state is about to do something, or by providing an explanation for why the other party did something. By supplying such information, one can trigger the leader's reaction, or confirm him in his plans, or induce him to alter them. For example, in 1965, the Indonesian Communist Party is said to have launched its ill-timed attempt at a *coup d'etat* in response to false information that President Sukarno was dying. This move resulted in a disaster from which the Indonesian Communist Party has never recovered." Codevilla points out that the "truth or falsity of the information does not necessarily affect its usefulness. Whether true or false, information can calm or influence factional disputes, raise or lower confidence, or raise or lower the stock of an official. The key question regarding any item is 'How will it affect the recipient?'" Open propaganda or information clearly has its limits: first, the information is open to public scrutiny and verification; and second, its source with its particular motivations and self-interests can be readily identified and evaluated.

Of *coup d'etat*, Codevilla says that "it is relatively simple to foil the coup merely by revealing the plan, sowing dissension among the plotters. It is more difficult to help a coup succeed. People not directly involved must be mobilized to support it; yet this must be done so as not to reveal the ultimate goal." Not to be discounted as an effective measure is violence or the threat of violence against officials and public figures of the "target country" as it may directly influence decisions. Codevilla stresses: "How many government, business, labor, and professional leaders have been

killed to help or hinder political developments! Violence is all the more effective politically if its perpetrators cannot be linked directly on whose behalf they act. Without such linkage, the target public cannot focus its anger on something outside itself, and may turn in upon itself. To the extent that a country which fosters political violence in another does so covertly, it escapes retaliation. . . the amount of secrecy required to avoid retaliation from a target country decreases along with the target country's power. For the utterly weak, no pretense is needed."

Under the section heading of "Influencing the Character of the Target's Body Politic," the same policy-maker begins by saying that "if one nation has built clandestine networks in another country to influence its decisions and exercises that influence repeatedly, then the nation will be able to change or modify the character of the said country's political landscape." He adds that with effort the first country "can even change the other's very culture." But this section, for the most part, has to do with the project of making and managing puppets, and doubtless this endeavor concerns the Aquino government and its alignment of forces. Codevilla is cognizant of the fact that "few political leaders can bear to think of themselves as puppets. In fact, some may convince themselves that they are true patriots, engaged in the thankless task of getting the best possible deal from the dominant power of the day. The price of latitude, such people argue, is the covert acceptance of the superior power's policies, somewhat modified, in one's own name." Here we recall, for instance, the deposed President Marcos' posture as nationalist to conceal his basic subservience. And now, in some local quarters, there is an undisguised and fervid espousal of the US line. In the making of a puppet, Codevilla writes that "the fateful first step in the process of building a puppet is to induce him to make a major issue in his country of the relations between the two countries, preferably a treaty which grants the other a commanding advantage, and then to cooperate in an effort to 'sell' his own people on

those relations or on that treaty. This habituates the foreign [read local] leader to regard his own countrymen who oppose him as more alien or dangerous than the foreigners who support him."

As for more pliable material, "a different puppet can be made from the leader who is trying to climb up or to keep on the ladder of success, and who is not particular about where he gets help in doing it. If one provides such help, the puppet's dependence can grow with his power and usefulness. Covertness of support is most important as the relationship of dependence is established and as the puppet gains strength." Also, the success in making puppets, Codevilla says, lies not so much on covertness as in "the right choice of the puppet" (here the criteria could combine firmness and control over the body politic, large popular support, a basic congeniality to US interests, along with a professed concern for human rights, and perhaps a nagging insecurity that solicits advice from "the right sources") as well as "the skill with which he (or it) [*sic*, possibly meaning the ultimately dehumanized robot] is managed." Codevilla adds that "finally there is no substitute for the capability to crush rebellious puppets militarily."

All this must stem from a superior and prejudiced view of other people towards whom no respect is felt, much less any understanding or appreciation of other people's humanity which can only be ruthlessly manipulated or destroyed. In this blind and obtuse dogmatism, the world is divided into those serving US interests and therefore "friends" no matter if they be servile puppets, glorified goons or corrupt officials whose very corruption was bred by such a relationship, and those who refuse to be manipulated to serve US interests and therefore "enemies" to be eliminated. Vernon Walters points out the necessity of identifying "key figures whom it seems desirable to manipulate" and assessing their vulnerabilities. He realizes, however, that "the most serious problem is the highly motivated individual who has been intelligent enough to realize that there must be no vulnerabilities in his life that would expose him to blackmail or other forms of pressure."

He then quotes the words of the poet Hafiz who said that "The heart of the most powerful tyrant trembles before the man who wants nothing for himself." Against such men these wily stratagems of blandishment and blackmail will not prevail. It is also clear in this context that decent and principled statesmen, propeople and antiimperialist, whose lives are above reproach, are viewed as constituting "serious problems" in the advancement of US interests in the world.

Current American foreign policy is bound up with the Reagan Doctrine which, to quote Cyrus Vance, "takes shelter under the banner of human rights" and justifies intervention with a bias for military options in antiinsurgency operations. Reagan's human rights policy developed from the distinction made by former US representative to the UN Jeane Kirkpatrick in a November 1970 article for *Commentary*, the same journal which printed Russ H. Munro's article vilifying Filipino insurgent leaders 'as a sinister bloodthirsty pack. The conservative Kirkpatrick drew a distinction between "authoritarian" countries, seen as friendly to the US, such as the Marcos dictatorship, Haiti with its now deposed Duvalier, and Chile with the still active Pinochet who is carrying on a veritable reign of terror, and "totalitarian" states seen as hostile, referring to socialist countries. Cyrus Vance himself writes in *Foreign Policy* (Summer 1986) that "the implication that such a doctrine provides a basis for condoning brutality if committed by authoritarian governments friendly to the US is mind-boggling." Such a policy is bankrupt, he says, and damages the US's standing in the world. With its dogmatism, and inflexibility, the doctrine "clearly holds out the possibility of military intervention by US forces," despite repeated denials by the administration.

Of course, American intervention in the Philippines is almost a century old. It dates back from the turn-of-the century when the Americans entered that critical juncture of our history during the anticolonial revolution under the pretext of aiding the Filipinos against Spain but subsequently installing themselves as the new colonial power at the cost of

thousands of Filipino lives. B. Hugh Tovar, another participant in the Covert Action Colloquium cites a postwar instance: "The Philippines, 1952-56, where the operators did almost everything right, is also a case study in State/CIA collaboration under ambassadorial direction. More important, it showed how an insurgency can be handled without getting the US directly involved. The untimely death of Ramon Magsaysay in 1957 was regrettable but it had the side effect of ensuring that the operation never turned sour. Official US dealings with Magsaysay were already offering an object lesson in how not to treat a friend. Had he lived longer, we might have ruined him." (Shall one read sinister implications in this?) Harvard academic Samuel T. Huntington assents to this when he says that: "One only has to think of what the world would be like if we hadn't engaged in covert action in Western Europe, in the Middle East, or in the Philippines or Central America and the Caribbean. Obviously, it would be very different — and a much worse world." Worse, indeed, from the US point of view. The Magsaysay case is but one declassified instance: but what about the many other instances still too explosive and too recent to reveal?

There is no doubt that in this critical period of our history, there is a perceptible, vigorous activity of US covert and overt operations, as suggested by the stream of American visitors and White House envoys. In the latter part of 1986, the attention of the United States was sharply focused on a number of interrelated issues with a bearing on US interests: 1) the assessment of the quality of the present leadership in relation to competing factions that vociferously espouse the US line and which thus put pressure on President Aquino to align herself more categorically with these interests — in other words, will she "deliver the goods"?; (2) the insurgency, the government's counterinsurgency policy, and the ceasefire talks which the US then feared could lead to political accommodation with the NDF; 3) the presence of liberal or "left-leaning" Cabinet ministers; and 4) the US military bases, their continued operation or condi-

tions for operation being dependent on the character of the national leadership.

It is only too clear that all the events that occurred immediately before and after the February Rebellion must be viewed in the larger context of US intervention and in the deeper dimension of covert action, that is, gauging the extent that the US played its hand with the cooperation of local agents at the same time that it concealed its involvement. On her part, Mrs. Aquino shows another less obvious side: her essential and ultimate reliance on US-manipulated traditional politics. Here the US interest lies in a decisive military eradication of the insurgency, in which an "optimum situation" is seen in minimal US intervention, in the now familiar phrase, "with the US not getting directly involved" -- and this at the cost of the lives of the masses of Filipino peasants and workers.

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MYTHS IN RELIGION AND POLITICS

Religion and politics seemingly make the strangest bedfellows, but their apparent lack of connection is precisely the myth which conceals the deep and devious links that bind them to each other. It is a myth that is continually fed and fostered to make people blissfully unaware of religious maneuvering in the field of politics and political manipulation in the field of religion. For one, religion is not only a matter of belief in God, it also means, for most Filipinos, the institutional Church, with its traditional hierarchy which influences and controls the lives of millions of Filipinos.

The long shadow of religion on the country's political life is viewed against the background of the unity of the Church and State during the Spanish Colonial period. From the *encomienda* system to the cash crop agriculture of the mid-nineteenth century, religion was the principal ideological apparatus which subsumed education and the family in its function of maintaining the relations of power and privilege.

Religion, with its conservative fire-and-brimstone aspect, is called upon to exercise extraeconomic coercion in the feudal system, which, unlike capitalism, does not demand the re-investment of surplus in the means, which is the land, to keep the system running and to maintain ownership rights.

The Church owned — and still owns — vast tracts of land through land grants given by the Spanish Crown, donations by public individuals, and through outright usurpation. On the eve of the Revolution of 1896, it claimed a total of 460,146 acres in land aside from other properties such as the first banking institutions and schools for the elite. It is therefore no surprise that in the interest of colonial domination, friar orders such as the Dominicans masterminded military expeditions against recalcitrant natives to punish them and relocate them in villages in the colonial policy of *reduccion* (Salgado, 1985).

Needless to say, the unity of Church and State gave rise to frailocracy (*la soberania monacal*) which Marcelo H. del Pilar strongly assailed and which was personified in Graciano Lopez Jaena's grotesque Fray Botod and in Rizal's Father Damaso outraged by his portion of chicken wings at table. The abuses of the friars led to the struggle for secularization and Filipinization of the parishes in which Filipino seculars were to replace Spanish regulars of the friar orders. Militant Filipino clergy resenting discrimination moved towards a nationalist perspective in the struggle which claimed the lives of Fathers Gomez, Burgos and Zamora in 1872 and more unknown martyrs. Secularization was a cause espoused by the Propagandists whose anticlerical stance was often intensified by their Masonic affiliation. Under these conditions, the antifriar movement acquired a political dimension in the wake of a burgeoning nationalism. It was also against this setting that the Propaganda Movement, the Revolution of 1896 and the Malolos Constitution of the Republic had a distinctly secular cast. The Revolutionary Government, as it proceeded to confiscate friar lands, proposed the separation of Church and State and the equality of worship to

consolidate its gains.

Because of the powerful role of the Church in the Spanish colonial period, the American colonial government deemed it necessary to draw up a friar policy. The importance of the measure was such that the government sent a mission to the Vatican headed by Taft himself to confer with the Pope regarding the disposition of friar estates and the withdrawal of the friars from the country. The Vatican, however, maintained a conservative stand through its first Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines, Placide Louis Chapelle, Archbishop of New Orleans in Louisiana, USA. From the outset, it was clear that the progressive native clergy would continue to be discriminated against to the extent of being imprisoned, exiled and persecuted while the Spanish friars remained in large numbers. Moreover, the friar orders clung to their choice lands and surrendered only the areas of lesser value which were sold mainly to the *ilustrados* in the bureaucracy.

One area which the new colonial administration clearly defined was the separation of Church and State, which according to the Letter of Instructions, was to be "real, entire, and absolute." Along with this was the injunction that "no form of religion, and no minister of religion shall be forced upon any community." These, however, were not new contributions from the part of the colonial government but only reflected the aspirations of the revolutionaries who had fought for the aborted Republic. More significant, perhaps, was the Faribault Plan under the Educational Act which provided that "No teacher or other person shall teach or criticize the doctrines of any church, religious sect or denomination, or shall attempt to influence the pupils for or against any church or religious sect in any public school established under this act. . . . "This plan which guaranteed freedom of worship also had the effect of reducing the dominance of the Catholic Church and opening the doors to Protestant sects prevalent in the United States.

With the formal "granting" of independence in 1946, the institutional Church became a more aggressive pressure

group which consolidated its conservative elements. These had been activated during the Second World War as they rallied to the support of the Axis Powers, in particular, the Spanish Falange of Francisco Franco, in the bitter civil war with the Republicans. Counted among the Manila Falange were prominent members of the Spanish community here, including university rectors and heads of elite schools who actually celebrated the fascist defeat of the Spanish people's democratic and republican aspirations. In 1955 a test of strength came up with the Rizal Bill authored by Recto which proposed that the *Noli* and *Fili* be compulsory reading in all universities and colleges. This ran into head-on conflict with the Catholic hierarchy which argued that the bill would "violate freedom of conscience and religion" and went to the extent of issuing a pastoral letter enjoining Catholics to oppose it. Replying to a threat that Catholic schools would close should the Rizal Bill pass, Recto countered with the proposal to nationalize all schools. In the emotionally charged debates, the Church hurled the then ultimate accusation at Recto of being communist and anti-Catholic. The result of the controversy was a compromise measure in which the basic text in the college course would still be the unexpurgated editions although students could apply for exemption from reading them on the grounds of religious belief.

This controversy over the novels of the national hero harks back to the Inquisition of medieval times with its list of forbidden books to be removed from the perusal of the reading faithful -- books declared to be "injurious to faith and morals" but which in essence exposed oppressive colonial relations or challenged the traditional system of privilege.

During the postwar years, the institutional Church was indifferent to the masses, and as the society pages of the period show, enjoyed a congenial, if not symbiotic, relationship with the Manila elite. From the Fifties to the Sixties, few and far between were the Church's expression of concern for the poor. Fr. Pedro V. Salgado cites the Bishops' Joint Pastoral Letter on Social Justice in May 1949 which

only deals incidentally with the poor but rather focuses on what it called the "sinister peril" and "tide of advancing Communism." In this instance, the Church was acting in conjunction with the government's anti-Huk campaign and the witchhunts in the academe instituted by the State.

The Marcos regime was particularly spectacular in its manipulation of religion to serve its end of self-perpetuation. Religion was brought into the State propaganda machinery for its power of religious and moral coercion in conjunction with the State's use of force and repression. Being a dictatorship with dynastic ambitions, coupled with clientelism and extravagance, the Marcos regime perceived that it had to maintain an elaborate superstructural apparatus of culture and religion to lend it the needed legitimacy.

On the other hand, the Church, stirring from its stagnant condition, declared Vatican II which urged bishops, priests and nuns to go to the world and involve themselves. The ensuing exposure to society was an eyeopener for many religious; the shock of reality awakened their social consciousness. More importantly, the Church itself became an activated ground that brought out into the open the contradictions within it. The institutional Church, undergoing vigorous ferment, was no longer a solid and unified institution. A breach within it was widening: at one end, priests taking up arms against an abusive regime, and at the other end, clergy conniving with landlords to defend the *status quo*. Progressive clergy proceeded to actively engage in human rights organizations and grassroots programs for the poor masses.

To counter their successful work in politicizing the masses and making them aware of their rights, the State, in collusion with US imperialist interests, opened the floodgates to American evangelists of all stripes of oratory, to the Charismatics and Born Again, the Bible sects, and even the well-funded Maharishi which had the capability to exercise considerable influence through the schools but which was fortunately prevented by vigilance. But the real threat was seen in liberation theology or its local form, the Theology

of Struggle, not so much in its "preferential option" for the poor nor for its legitimation of use of arms as a last recourse in defense against consistent and systematic state violence, but in the idea that true justice could be achieved only through a radical redistribution of society's goods, along with the idea that it was possible to be a Christian believer and a Marxist at the same time. This idea effectively removes the most valuable card of the conservative elite which is the bogey of "godlessness". The conservatives stand to lose their ability to appeal to or invoke the religiosity of the Filipinos, which they assert, is part of the national identity, and would make it natural for the people to reject a "godless" system. Progressive clergy see no logical basis for an incompatibility between a personal belief in God and an active aspiration for the redistribution of the country's wealth in favor of those who produce the wealth. Another card of the conservative is the insistence on faith which opposes the logic of politicization. The conservative elements of the Church favor the fostering of an antiintellectual religion, emotionally charged and therefore highly susceptible to subliminal suggestion thus creating the predisposition to hysteria and prejudice.

As expected, liberation theology was attacked by an orchestration of byzantine counterarguments, especially by the Opus Dei, which like the earlier Cursillo, has its roots, in conservative Spain. The network, however, is spread wider than meets the eye. The magazine *Witness* reports that in the late Sixties, the CIA, active in the Third World, funneled several million dollars into a research institute in Chile headed by Jesuit Roger Vekemans to spearhead a campaign against the theology of liberation and to have it declared heretical. The DeRance Foundation of Milwaukee, America's wealthiest religious foundation, funds efforts to discredit progressive religious thinking all over the world. Institutions such as these can effect hidden link-ups with armies fighting liberation movements. The CIA, with its long history, can go as far as stage-managing "miracles" in the depressed regions of the world, in Latin America, Asia, and in poor areas of Spain and Portugal in order to take

advantage of the gullibility of the people.

The Pope himself has not been of great help. While the recent Church Council recognized the legitimacy of liberation theology, his latest statements alternate between admonitions to the clergy not to involve themselves in political issues and hoary pronouncements regarding the existence of angels.

It was a result of many years of the people's mass movement that the Church hierarchy with big numbers of religious came together in a united effort to oust the dictator. Yet soon after the installation of the Aquino government the conservative elements of the Church came to the fore with their lavish demonstration of support for the military. This public display of unity and affection between the elite clergy and the military seemingly made the militant and oppositional liberation theology moot and academic in one stroke. Yet such an exercise only brought out into clear day the dominant forces in the Church with their maneuvering to gear the Aquino government according to their interests.

A paper of Col. Galileo Kintanar written during the Marcos regime made the following cogent observations: "Apart from religious consideration, the Catholic Church in the Philippines has temporal interests that apparently fix it on the conservative or even reactionary side. It has tremendous assets in capital and land. It would not risk these in a violent revolution. The temporal interests of the Church are derived from a long history of being an instrument of colonial domination and being a close ally of the ruling elite in whichever social system that has arisen in the Philippines. It is bound by countless social ties to the incumbent social elite in the urban rural areas." Meanwhile, behind the bright public facade is concealed the Oppressed Church, the Church of the Poor, which has a long memory of its many true sons and daughters.

THE COUP AS MILITARY TOOL

It may be said that much of the public anxiety generated by the coup attempts is heightened by the fact that the *coup d'etat* as military tool is still alien to our political experience and therefore felt as a grievous violation of our national life. However, the series of foiled *coups d'etat* cannot but be viewed as delayed aftershocks of Marcos' imposition of martial rule in 1972. For, in fact, Proclamation 1081 was a virtual *coup d'etat*, not against another government, to be sure, but against the established politico-legal structures of government, since Marcos, declaring a state of national emergency in the face of the "communist threat," bypassed the constitutional laws on presidential tenure in order to install himself as dictator and then proceed to create the state apparatus of one-man rule. The threats of a coup created a tense atmosphere in Manila as they raised the imminent possibility of an overnight drastic shift of power attended by state terror through military rule.

The attempts at the seizure of state power by a small

faction of the military — more in the nature of a rightwing military putsch because it involves a small scale of conspirators — are but manifestations of the Marcos legacy of militarism that persists through the Aquino government. Despite a massive reorganization of the civilian bureaucracy to the extent of brushing away the civil service tenure of small employees, the military apparatus inherited from Marcos has remained intact, with efforts at reorganization directed mainly on individuals such as the retirement of overstaying generals and the promotion in rank of a number of officials, rather than on the structure itself. There is no doubt that up to now the organizational dynamo of the Marcos military machine is still very much in place. And again, the ouster of former MND Minister Enrile and the isolation of his circle of RAM boys was more of a localized measure than an overhauling of the military apparatus.

All through that period, the RAM boys and the Marcos loyalists jointly and consistently assumed a fierce anti-communist posture — which, while being the traditional stand of the Philippine military — is, in the present context, a strong bid for United States support. Drawing from the Marcos experience, the coup plotters were banking on the fact that anticommunism is the easy ticket to US political support and the key word that can trigger a massive bonanza of military and economic aid. The noisier and more vociferous their protestations were and the more fervent their testimonials to American democracy with vows to enshrine US interests in the country, the more unstinting and substantial the desired effects would be. Their motives make familiar signals in the landscape: “To save the republic from communism” or “To contain the communist threat” — words that made up the basic grammar of the Marcosian vocabulary.

Possibly a great source of frustration for the group were the continuous reassurances of US support for the Aquino government. Now the US pursues a new tactic of applying gentle pressure on what it possibly perceives as “the right puppet to develop,” as the CIA Colloquium on Covert Action

would put it, to be carefully molded with soft words of approval while now and then inserting more businesslike and directional hints on restructuring the Cabinet "with a heavy emphasis on security for the country" or on reorganizing the military "to gain the confidence of the people" — general-sounding suggestions planted with the mind of turning Mrs. Aquino to make the "right" interpretation and hence the "right" course of action. This new situation which involves the cultivation of Mrs. Aquino gives the US government a valuable opportunity for a new political case study in approaches and a chance of steering clear from the problem that carries the inconvenience of international censure of supporting a repressive authoritative government, while at the same time being able to secure US interests, and with popular support in the bargain. This present case they perceive as a delicate and sensitive operation of applying the right amount of pressure at determined points and carefully calibrated intervals to elicit the optimum reaction, without the US betraying its hand.

The particular vulnerability of the Aquino government lies in the sorry state of the national economy which the President intends to solve by drawing in foreign investment with incentives as high as one hundred percent equity, a situation which would further tighten the vicious circle of poverty and imperialism. Now, this time, the US wants to take the chance of pulling off a sleek operation on the Philippine government and former colony harboring two important bases. In other words, it wants to play a delicate and titillating parlor game this time — with its big interests at stake — and not the same old crude and bludgeoning sport which, of course, remains an option in reserve.

As a consequence of the repeated coup attempts, some quarters bewail what they perceive as the politicization of the military — in other words, its unity has been breached and factionalism has reared its head for or against the incumbent executive and commander-in-chief. But one cannot resist the question: Why only now, with the emergence of the

seemingly liberal Aquino government, does the military show a split in its ranks? During the 20 long years of the Marcos dictatorship, the military corps betrayed no cracks at the seams except at the very last minute in February. The military as "apolitical" and "professional" would mean that it recognizes at all times the hierarchy of command from the President and the top generals to the rank-and-file that is well-defined in a constituted government. It takes its orders strictly according to this order of command which identifies its enemies, local and foreign, and spells out its tasks, and that therefore it cannot be drawn willy-nilly into partisan political disputes. But it cannot be "apolitical" in the sense of insulated or above social and political life, because, for one, its members have their own class origins and alliances, and also because politics in the Philippines is highly regionalistic as well as personalistic and marked by feudal-clientelistic relationships. Randall and Theobald maintain that "a good deal of evidence indicates that broader societal conflicts and divisions are in one way or another reflected or refracted within the military." And conservative academic Samuel Huntington adds the observation that when the masses have become socially conscious and politicized, raising demands for greater political participation, "the military becomes a conservative force protecting the existing order against the incursions of the lower classes" and that the military as the "doorkeeper" of political participation has as its historic role "to open the door to the middle classes and to keep it closed to the lower classes."

From this point of view, the coup attempts have the character of what is called a "veto coup" which arises from within the socio-political system during a period of increasing mass participation in politics or in rising expectations of popular participation. For we are witness to the burgeoning mass organizations, the increasing strength of militant labor in the KMU, in addition to which there is BAYAN and more recently *Partido ng Bayan*, which together mobilize the masses in the political life of the country with the promise of greater latitudes in involvement. The coup

attempts then, with their characteristic attacks on left-leaning political leaders that open the possibility for the broader expression of political will, were at the bottom meant to block the rising popular expectations of structural change. The "veto coup" thus reflects the will of the conservative middle class and of its members in the officer corps who have recourse to the *coup d'état* as a military tool to safeguard their economic interests.

An added dimension to this is the fact that the military in the Philippines was not an indigenous creation but a creature of colonial rule. The Philippine Scouts and the Philippine Constabulary were instituted in the 1930s to form a national colonial police force which later became the nucleus of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The formation of the Philippine military was under the direction of Douglas MacArthur who served as "field marshal" of the Commonwealth government. Even after World War II and the post-war Republic, the military was rebuilt "almost precisely along American lines," according to Poole and Vanzì in *Revolution in the Philippines* who point out that "much of the organization was carried out on the spot by American advisers, members of the American military assistance contingent that then, as in 1984, (and possibly up to now) was connected with the US Embassy. At first, the Constabulary was kept apart, reporting to the Department of the Interior. But since aiding local police fell outside treaty arrangements with America, and the Constabulary was anyway being used against the Huks as a regular combat force, it was integrated into Magsaysay's Department of National Defense, making it eligible like the army, for American assistance in the field and also for officer training in the United States." From these origins, it naturally follows that the traditional orientation of the military in the Philippines is to protect US economic and political interests here and those of the local conservative classes that benefit from their role as agents of foreign monopoly capital and the US military-industrial complex. Edward S. Herman writes of the parallel Latin American experience that US

military training "has not given the slightest nod toward either democratic values or human rights; instead, it has provided all the essentials of the National Security State ideology" which has for fundamentals "the omnipresence of the subversive (communist) threat, total war between the forces of good and evil, and the importance of the military-security forces as protectors of Christianity, Democracy and the Free World."

During the Marcos dictatorship, the military apparatus was greatly refurbished by increasing its number of general officers tenfold and its overall strength fivefold, as Marcos marshalled it to serve his personal interests and the increasing number of crony-held corporations. For a greater centralization of authority, he integrated the National Police and the Philippine Constabulary under one command. The PC and the Metrocom were called upon to break strikes and the Marines were brought in to crush community resistance to the demolition of shanties to make way for subdivisions. Marcos also created the Civilian Home Defense Force and encouraged the proliferation of paramilitary units, some composed of mad fanatics and religious warrior sects, and tolerated private armies to protect landed estates and concessions in order to raise the level of terror and keep the people under control.

In this context, Poole and Vanzi point out, military abuses were not merely random and regrettable incidents, but on the contrary, the abuses themselves formed part of the military plan for they ensured that fighting would continue in the rural areas, thus giving evidence of armed guerrilla resistance which would be construed in Washington as the "communist threat" to the strategic interests in the region and would thus call for more military aid and logistics.

Under the Aquino government, doubtless the US interests in the Philippines remain, but the present government becomes crucial because of the bases issue that will come up in 1991. While the Americans for some time tactically

avoided mention of the bases, they are at present conducting a softening-up campaign on Mrs. Aquino to prepare her to be fully disposed in their favor in 1991 and in the meantime amenable to their political and economic interests.

Meanwhile, as an important indication of her frame of mind, Mrs. Aquino has responded negatively to continuous public demands to dismantle the paramilitary units which have been responsible for many of the grossest violations of human rights. The brutal killing of Father Favali alone could easily have made her decide to disband the CHDF, Pres. Aquino being the highly religious person that she is. And yet for a government which takes pride in its popularity and consent, why has Mrs. Aquino left the huge Marcos machinery of coercion virtually untouched and untrimmed to size? If it is to protect her government from the Marcos loyalists, does she need to maintain such an elaborate and ungainly war machine for that purpose?

Is it then to fight the NPA guerrillas? But if the NPA are still active in the field, it is only because the Marcos military and oppressive bureaucratic structures still remain. It is to be recalled that soon after the February Rebellion, the military launched a massive operation in Cagayan with tanks and helicopter gunships. Was Mrs. Aquino aware of this and let it pass as a "reward" and concession to interested military groups? When the peasants on two occasions held a long march from the North to Malacañang she refused to lend an ear to their grievances, since they did not rate high among her priority visitors such as American advisers and were even told that their kind of pressure politics was unacceptable, aside from the bare fact that they reeked of sun and sweat. Indeed, this refusal to dialogue led to the Mendiola massacre on January 22, 1987.

Mrs. Aquino's political consciousness skims on the surface of the urban middle class, the motorcade set, and the landlord aristocrats, and her popularity among the masses could well be an illusion. Her approach to the NDF negotiations was marked by impatience and testiness at alleged delays,

and she then seemed to view the possible ceasefire agreement as one more to chalk up on her list of presidential accomplishments to boost her stock internationally, especially among our creditor countries, the US and Japan. In her perception, the desired ceasefire would have the effect of clearing the business climate for foreign investments with the money to come pouring in to save the economy. But should the peace talks fail for lack of time to understand and come to a real agreement, then it's so sorry, folks, but she will not hesitate to set the giant war machine in full gear against the "enemies of peace" to unleash a full-blown counterinsurgency operation, which incidentally, will trigger an avalanche of US military and economic aid to safeguard its "strategic interests," and the money will also come pouring in "to save the economy." It is all a neat little equation in which she wins both ways. And this, to the popular Mrs. Aquino, must be the reason why she up to now chooses to keep the giant Marcos military apparatus intact: to use as a leverage for military and economic aid, in the same way Marcos used it. Now, as to which course would be more congenial to the US -- the second while requiring a big outlay in aid, will have the effect of considerably reducing its enemies on this wrong side of the globe. And in the end she will be lauded for having done a better job than Marcos, the RAM, and the Marcos loyalists put together. Will this indeed be the final outcome of the February Rebellion?

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HISTORY INTO MYTH

One of the most engrossing histories to come out in recent years is Reynaldo Clemeña Ilet̃o's *Pasyon and Revolution*. Focusing on the popular movements in the Philippines from 1840 to 1910, the book purports to show through the *pasyon* and oral literature of the period, as well as through biographical accounts, the significant influence of the *pasyon* as the ideological matrix of the revolutionary movements.

The book, which opens with the Lapiang Malaya massacre invites a lively interest in its historical method because of the author's expressed intention "to write history from below" -- that is, from the point of view of the masses. Viewed in the context of Philippine historiography in general, this augurs a new and welcome development in a field marked by *ilustrado* dominance. Ilet̃o acknowledges Renato Constantino's contribution to the understanding of these movements which the latter regarded as "genuine vehicles for the expression of the people's dream of national liberation and economic amelioration." But Ilet̃o's project of "history from

below" further aims to look at events from within, "from the perspectives of the masses themselves insofar as the data allow it."

Now, such an approach which avowedly assumes the point of view of the dominated classes of society would be easily construed to have Marxist affinities. Furthermore, it is an approach which sharply brings out conflict in terms of class interest between the revolutionary masses and the reformist *ilustrados* as the author demonstrates how the masses actively pursued revolutionary goals years after the capitulation of the *ilustrados* to the new colonial order and their accommodation to gradualist politics. Iletto recognizes that "the condition of the rural life greatly influenced the masses' style of action," at the same time that the relationship of base and superstructure "was not deterministic, nor was culture (i.e., the superstructure) without some autonomy relative to their material life" — an assertion which he supports with a footnote regarding the relative autonomy of the superstructure as developed in the later Marxist texts.

What Marxist influence there is in Iletto's historiography proves to be only initial and superficial as further reading will show. His work bears the imprint of other historiographies which may or may not overlap the Marxism. Themes of the historiographies of the last fifty years interweave within his work. From the *Annales* historians Braudel, and Marc Bloch he derives his interdisciplinary thrust in which he brings together history and the folk literary traditions, as here the *pasyon* and the *awit* of the period. From Bloch, Iletto also draws the notion of "collective consciousness" which he uses to strengthen his thesis on the cohesiveness of folk revolutionary perceptions. Still along the lines of the *Annales d'histoire economique et sociale*, a review founded in 1929, Iletto diverges from the traditional *histoire evenementielle*, the political narrative of the events, battles, and treaties, to the study of cultural expressions and perceptions, as here, the influence of the *pasyon* on the politics of the masses.

As against a history dominated by great personages that almost invariably belong to the ruling classes, he focuses on the figures commonly considered marginal in terms of dominant politics: "bandits," outlaws, madmen, "external agitators," subversives — aberrations in the "total harmony and equilibrium of the social structure," as the functionalists would put it.

Ileto's rejection of linear, evolutionist history and his allowance for reversal, discontinuity, and conflict aligns his work with the recent theories of history. As against traditional history which posits a single uninterrupted chain of causality in events unfolding progressively, leaving behind assorted baggage from past systems, Ileto holds the view that history (with Biblical history as model) is marked by ruptures, breaks, cataclysms, and revolutionary events. He sees a rupture between the mass revolutionary struggle and the Malolos Republic dominated by the *ilustrados*, contrary to the majority of historians who see an unbroken continuity between the Revolution of 1896 and the Republic which was its "culmination," however short-lived. This interpretation can be compared to that of Constantino who interprets the Bonifacio-Aguinaldo conflict as "a cooptation of the *Katipunan* mass movement by the elite whose narrow class interests made them vacillate and compromise with the enemy." Also situating himself in opposition to the rigid evolutionary framework of modernization theories, Ileto believes that "modern ideas can be grafted onto traditional models of thought."

The key to Ileto's concept of history is the *pasyon* and the place that he ascribes to it in the popular mass movements of the nineteenth century. In particular, this is the *Pasyon Pilapil* or *Pasyon Henesis* which begins with the Creation of the World and ends with the Apocalypse and the Last Judgment. The thesis of *Pasyon and Revolution* revolves around the *pasyon*: that it provided "a language for articulating the values, ideals, hopes of liberation of the masses" and that "the experience of Holy Week fundamentally shaped the

style of peasant brotherhoods and uprisings during the Spanish and early American colonial periods." Regarding as insufficient the common interpretation of the *pasyon* (with the *sinakulo* as its dramatized form) as functioning to instill submission to the colonial system, Ileo instead endeavors to point out what he perceives to be the revolutionary implications of this folk form. According to him, it was the *pasyon* which culturally prepared the masses for their anticolonial struggle and that indeed, "the ideas of nationalism and independence were expressed in the idiom of the *pasyon*."

This theory which argues the crucial role of the *pasyon* in the Philippine Revolution strikes one as indeed novel and invites a host of questions as well as reservations. Ileo identifies the *pasyon* as the principal cultural vehicle and expression of the peasant folk who joined the *Katipunan* and the various brotherhoods who carried on the armed struggle against Spain in 1896 and against the United States after 1900. It was the *pasyon* which articulated their values, interests, aspirations, their perception of their historic role. We are aware, however, that in the Tagalog regions where the *pasyon* enjoyed widespread popularity, it was the cultural possession of all, peasant and *ilustrado* alike. It was mainly the *principalia* who gathered their communities for the *pabasa* which became a common social gathering. Were then the *principalia* totally unaware of the revolutionary interpretation of the *pasyon* which the masses were reading into it and developing as a guide for action? And did these same not perceive the threat to their class interests and therefore attempt to suppress its popularity?

The non-Christian communities of the Cordillera and the Muslims of Mindanao successfully and consistently repulsed the encroachment of the colonizers, certainly without the aid of the *pasyon*. And the areas in which the influence of the Tagalog *pasyon*, *Pilapil* was not strong — although there nevertheless was an important Holy Week tradition — did not lag behind in the participation in the revolution. In fact,

as William Henry Scott attests, the revolutionary *Katipunan* was supplemented with other forms of organized manifestations. He cites, for instance, that the people of Tagudin, Ilocos Sur filed an official complaint in Vigan against their parish priest for the practice of flogging, and this in a clear and admirably well-argued letter. In Ilagan, Isabela, the town-folk, also tired of floggings, themselves lashed the *gobernadorcillo* to the whipping post. These, as the records show, were deliberate and organized mass actions without the underpinnings of mystical ritual. They were also successfully and effectively carried out without unnecessary loss of life, unlike in the case of rebel believers in *anting-anting* who perished before firepower.

Likewise, it is difficult to overlook the distinct antiseccular and anticlerical strain in the revolution which could not easily be brought under the mystical influence of the *pasyon*. It is highly probable that the anticlerical satire of Marcelo H. del Pilar, such as the *Dasalan at Tukoohan* which parodied a prayer form, Graciano Lopez Jaena's Fray Botod, or Rizal's Father Damaso and other irreverent caricatures, had a widespread popularity — if not the spirit and intellectual predisposition for satire, at least. Taken together, they reflected the rationalism of the Enlightenment in Europe, the seeds of which were widely diffused in the nineteenth century. These likewise sprang from the uncompromising anticlericalism of Masonry which was a significant intellectual influence of the period.

It is hard to subscribe to the idea that the political concepts of nationalism and independence are "essentially Western revolutionary aspirations" as Iletto avers. The material conditions of colonial exploitation and oppression would in themselves lead to the people's articulation and active pursuit of these ideals in revolution. The people themselves are capable of evolving political concepts and ideals from their conditions of life, while it is also true that the content of nationalism and independence can be variously defined by different social classes and in different

historical periods, in association with other ideological concepts, such as liberalism or populism, but with class interest as the articulating principle. More than this, what we are putting to question is the assertion that the *Katipunan* ideal as articulated by the peasant masses was essentially interlinked with religion and expressed in terms of the *Pasyon Henesis*. What is more likely is that the *pabasa* sessions of the *pasyon*, the prayer meetings of the brotherhoods, and, as William Henry Scott adds, horse races — all legitimate occasions of public gatherings — served as perfect fronts for the spread of the revolutionary gospel. But to ascribe to the *pasyon* the privileged role of providing the “matrix of meaning” for the revolutionary mass movement is, it seems, difficult to maintain. Surely, there were other influential cultural forms as well. Rizal himself was a legend in his lifetime through his writings, a number of which were translated into Ilocano and presumably other dialects, and served to fan the flames of anticolonialism. Aside from the *Kalayaan* of Bonifacio and Jacinto, there were regional “subversive” materials reported to be in circulation — and if the copies were few, these were passed from hand to hand. In his project of probing the revolutionary perception of the masses, Iletto confines himself mainly to the *pasyon*, the documents of the *cofradias* which are necessarily of a religious character, and the *kantahing bayan* or *awit*. But beyond these, there must have been a larger body of documents, letters, personal and official, manifestos, accounts, and parish records that reflected a more rational and secular bent.

The crux of the matter is that Iletto does not limit his task to demonstrating the central role of the *pasyon* as the vehicle for revolutionary aspirations. He raises his project onto a higher plane: to grasp the “collective consciousness of the Filipino peasant folk.” As earlier mentioned, this concept links Iletto’s history to the *Annales* historian Marc Bloch who showed affinities with the Durkheimian notion of *conscience collective* and whose books “illustrate that the fun-

damental realities of society are the developing systems of collective representations" (McLennan). But it also links Ito to Jung who introduced the concept of the "collective unconscious" and more importantly, to the French structural anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss.

From the outset, it is important to note that Ito, in his avowed task of probing the collective perception of the masses of revolution and change as integral to what he believes to be the indigenous world view, himself espouses this conceptual framework and gives full credence to it as a "valid alternative" to the modern scientific outlook. Bemoaning the prevailing lack of scholarship on the *anting-anting*, he writes: "The problem, perhaps, originates from the refusal of the 'modern, rational, and scientific' mind to study, much less accept the reality of other conceptual systems." Clearly, he does not dissociate himself from his subject but enters into the world view of the brotherhoods or *cofradías*, as can be seen from statements like: "Obviously, Eusebio Di-mabunggo had a great concentration of power in him that it affected others through his penetrating gaze." Or, alluding to the incomprehensible *oraciones* of Labios with his promise of eternal felicity and independence, Ito writes: "... we must regard Januario Labios as prophet and therefore a link between the two dimensions of time." Ito seizes upon a statement of a *cofradia* who emphatically avers that "Labios was not mad: in fact, his mind functioned in a totally regular and determined manner." This finds a supportive view in Levi-Strauss's "Structural Study of Myth": "If our interpretation is correct, we are led toward a completely different view, namely, that the kind of logic which is used by mythical thought is as rigorous as that of modern science, and that the difference lies not in the quality of intellectual process but in the nature of things to which it is applied."

In the passages in which Ito defines his concept of history, he states it in terms of a "divine plan," an underlying "consciousness," or a "universal pattern." He writes: "Beneath the flux of casual events operates a divine plan that,

hidden to human eyes, structures history according to a series of abrupt events leading to the final day of judgment. These 'abrupt events' can be anticipated by the faithful through certain signs. Apolinario was probably pointing to these when he advised the *cofrades* always to be aware of the 'meaning of the times.'" Iletto links this up with the *pasyon* which repeatedly warns of the necessity for "the perception of signs of change which lead to change in *loob*, so that the individual is attuned to, and participates in the unfolding events," for, in fact, the *Pasyon Pilapil* which opens with the Creation and ends with the Last Judgment is "an image of universal history, the beginning and end of time, rather than a simple gospel story."

He repeats this theme in another passage: "While religion as impressed by the friars upon the people encouraged resignation to 'things as they are' as being part of God's design, there was also the possibility that individuals might respond to certain themes, particularly those connected with Christ's passion, death, and resurrection, that have 'subversive' implications. After all, Biblical history proceeds in terms of cataclysmic events. Beneath the flux of everyday life operates a divine plan that is known to the faithful only through certain signs or *tanda*. The divine plan can also be known by reflecting upon certain mysteries or metaphors, called *talin-haga*, with which the *pasyon* abounds." Now, upon reflecting on these mysteries or portents pointed out by the rebel prophets, the people may stage an uprising or revolt as "a conscious act of realizing certain possibilities of existence" revealed to them by the "signs" - a trend of thought which is curiously devoid of the political. Iletto further avers that certain common features of the 1841 Hermano Pule uprising, the Cavite Mutiny of 1872, the *Katipunan* Revolt of 1896, and the Colorem revolts of the early 20th century indicate their relatedness "not in a certain chain of events, but in the common features through time of a consciousness that constantly seeks to define the world in its own terms."

Recapitulating his thesis at the end of the book, Iletto

writes that the similarity in form between these *cofradia* uprisings and the *Katipunan* "can be traced to the persistence of the *pasyon* in shaping the perceptions of particularly the poor and uneducated segments of the populace. Through the text and associated rituals, people were made aware of a pattern of universal history."

From the above, we can then summarize Iletto's concept of history into the following statements:

1) History has two dimensions: the everyday or the empirical, and the divine or the universal.

2) The divine plan or pattern of universal history is shaped by a consciousness, absolute, because seeking to define the world *in its own terms*. This plan, the underlying mythic dimension of history, makes itself known through signs, portents, and metaphors, through sets of ideas and images, as in the *pasyon* narrative of history from the Creation to the Last Judgment.

3) This history is not continuous but "cataclysmic," marked by a series of abrupt events, ruptures, reversals, and renewals.

4) The prophets, holy men, or visionary rebel leaders are mediums communicating with the saints and other holy figures and provide the links between the two dimensions of history because they are most sensitive to the signs of the divine plan in the process of realizing itself.

5) It is then the part of the people to look to the prophets for signs and reflect upon these so that they may undergo interior spiritual change and may thus participate in the unfolding of the mythic or divine dimension of history.

There is much that is inexorable and deterministic in this concept of history in which a divine and universal consciousness or will makes itself felt through temporal events. In this framework, man to be holy and to attain salvation both in this world and in the next must prepare his inner self to conform and participate in (*damay*) the unfolding of this plan. The spheres of the spiritual, moral, and political coincide in the actions taken to further the realization of

the divine plan.

As in the structuralist approach to myth, the Christ of the *pasyon* becomes the archetypal Redeemer and the *pasyon* itself becomes the paradigm for revolutionary mass movements. "For the inhabitants of the region continued to remember Apolinario de la Cruz, believing that he was alive in the land of paradise and return someday to help his people. But even more than the memory of a specific man and a specific movement, it was the vitality of the *pasyon* tradition that made it possible for ordinary folk to recognize the appearance of other Christ-like figures, each bringing the same message of hope that Apolinario brought." Or, in another passage, ". . . Salvador did not die because his personality lived on in others. It makes little difference whether we speak of a De la Cruz or a Sakay, a Rios or a Caneo, a Bonifacio or a De Guzman, a Labios or a Salvador. All of these leaders and their movements are. . . part of the same tree. We can include among them the martyrs Gomez, Burgos, Zamora, and Rizal — all educated men whose mode of dying was nevertheless perceived as signs of the *pasyon's* reenactment in the Philippine landscape." And again, "In later periods as we shall see, Jose Rizal and Felipe Salvador spoke to the people through leaders that came after them. In the same way did 'old Kalayaan,' or Mother Country, embodying the *ginhawa* of former times, enter the 'persona' of *Katipunan* leaders and speak through them." These figures occupy an identical place and function, that of Martyr/Redeemer, as in the structuralist interpretation of myth, and it makes little difference who occupies it at any one time.

History thus becomes subsumed under the Jungian universal pattern of myth, as in Joseph Campbell's *Hero with a Thousand Faces*, the classic study of archetypes. Point by point, homologies are drawn between the life and passion of Christ and the revolutionary leaders with the mythic narrative divided into a number of key episodes: bidding farewell to the mother (*pamamaalam*), going out into the world to preach (*lakaran*), betrayal by a close associate, death as martyr and hero, and resurrection. Bonifacio's

poem bidding goodbye to *Madre España* is seen in this light; revolution is seen as the quest for the lost Paradise. The discussion of the traditional concepts of power in Southeast Asian, particularly Javanese, myths also finds parallels in Christ and the peasant rebels. Bernardo Carpio is also brought into this framework as Redeemer and hero figure, together with the spirit of Kalayaan, Mother Country, Rizal, Gomez, Burgos, and Zamora.

Ileto freely draws parallelisms throughout the book: "the contrast between Salvador and his family recalls that between Jesus and his Mother Mary. On the day of the Pasch, as Jesus is about to leave home, he tells his tearful mother to endure the pain because he is doing God's will. Like Salvador's final request to his relatives, Jesus tells his cousin John (the Evangelist) to take good care of his mother." Or, "As the paradise of Adam and Eve breaks up when they succumb to the serpent's wiles, so did the idyllic existence of the early Filipinos fall apart when they were seduced by the enticing words of the Spanish colonizers." Bonifacio himself takes on the mysterious aura of myth: "Meanwhile, we are left wondering about Bonifacio — his passionate commitment, the vibrant language that inspired thousands to rise, and the emblems and symbols that often took on a magical significance to the masses." What one would ordinarily regard as pure coincidence or mere similarity of life experience is to Ileto not chance but indications of the shaping of the divine universal plan.

Ileto identifies the binary oppositions that constitute the mythic structure according to his structuralist strategy: *loob-labas*, *liwanag-dilim*, *patag-bundok*, as well as despair-hope, death-life, ignorance-knowledge, etc. For instance, the interiority of the revolutionary masses who perceive the right path is contrasted with the exteriority or image-building of the *ilustrados*. When Ileto declares that the *pasyon* provided "a language for articulating the values, ideals, hopes of liberation of the masses. . ." it is in the same sense that the structuralists hold that myth is a language among other systems of signification. In studies of the discourse of the

Katipunan and other brotherhoods, he demonstrates its parallelism to the *pasyon*. For instance, he interprets *katwiran* in Bonifacio's manifesto as the "straight path," a meaning directly derived from the root *tuwid*, which according to Ileta means the way illumined by the sun, the way of the Cross and rebirth — all these within the mythic context instead of the highly plausible meaning of "deductive reasoning" which derives truth from facts and the material conditions of life: "*Ytinuturo ng katwiran na huwag nating sayangin ang panahon sa pag-asa sa ipinangakong kaguinhawahan na hindi darating at hindi mangyayari. . . .*"

Language has a vivid visual counterpart in such recurrent images as the dawn, the rising sun, the lamp, the flame, the eye, the gate. E. J. Hobsbawm in *Primitive Rebels* regards symbols and rituals as constituting the *form* of the brotherhoods, initially necessary to ensure cohesion among its members within a hostile environment but gradually shed off with the development of political ideology. Within the religio-mythic framework of Ileta, however, the symbols and rituals of the brotherhoods are not mere form but indeed constitute the content of an experience through which the candidate undergoes the mythic journey from darkness to light, ignorance to wisdom, and oppression to freedom.

If one finds idiosyncratic this juxtaposition — indeed superposition — of history with myth, Ileta is in good company, as his precedent is Levi-Strauss. In "The Structural Study of Myth," the latter wrote: "When the historian refers to the French Revolution, it is always as a sequence of past happenings, a non-reversible series of events remote consequences of which may still be felt at present. But to the French politician, as well as to his followers, the French Revolution is both a sequence belonging to the past — as to the historian — and an everlasting pattern which can be detected in the present French social structure and which provides a clue for its interpretation, a lead from which to infer the future developments."

History is transmuted in Iletto into myth and the historical or diachronic gives precedence to the ahistorical or to synchronic structures. To say the least, a historiography which submits its subject, the matter and substance of history itself, to ahistorical structuring and to myth raises well-nigh insurmountable difficulties. History loses its historicity and becomes transformed into inexorable patterns of myth. As in religions of predestination, it is for the faithful only to comprehend the divine plan through "signs" and to accordingly gear their wills and actions towards its fulfillment. As in structuralism, form which is the universal pattern of myth takes precedence over content and historical specificity, since the places and functions constituting the mythic model can be occupied by and extrapolated into an infinite series of agents/occupants without affecting the structure. Moreover, what is of essential significance is the relationship between the elements of the structure rather than the agents themselves — a position which ultimately results in formalism and antihumanism. This strategy can be identified as the structuralist *combinatoire* defined in the glossary of Althusser's *Reading Capital* as "a formal pattern of relations and (arbitrarily occupied) places which recur as homologous patterns with a different content throughout the social formation and its history."

Such a framework which is ahistorical is ill-suited to reckon with differences in political content and circumstances. By what criteria will it distinguish between genuine revolutionary leadership and the false or counterrevolutionary inasmuch as these may fall under the same mythic pattern? It has ample room to accommodate patriots, as well as fascists and cranks, employing apparently similar political discourses, especially at a time when Reagan dignifies the mercenary rebel *contras* with the name of "freedom fighters".

If revolutions are to be viewed in terms of concepts such as "*liwanag*, transformation, and control of *loob*, commitment in the face of suffering, and paradise," such as Iletto identifies as elements of the world outlook of the brotherhoods and the *Katipunan*, these mystical and moral general-

ities cannot be translated into the strict economic and political categories necessary to create and maintain the human order aspired for. The Revolution of 1896 and the *cofradia* brotherhoods, as the author avers, revealed a collective perception that did not only seek to overthrow the colonial system but also to create an egalitarian, indeed, socialist, or even "communistic" society, as Iletto cites the authority of Isabelo de los Reyes. But given the heavy and elaborate mystical paraphernalia that Iletto brings out, how could the revolutionaries achieve such a difficult enterprise in one movement? Could they command the political incisiveness necessary to distinguish the "double articulation of politics" (Laclau): the contradiction of the struggle of the people, being all the progressive classes of society from the workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie to the national bourgeoisie, versus the power bloc (the imperialists and their local agents) and the contradiction of the class struggle itself and so plan their strategies accordingly?

In the harsh light of imperialism and *realpolitik*, the mystification of history is the last thing that the contemporary Filipino needs. *Anting-antings* can only turn primitive rebels into dead heroes whose tragedy is that it took their own deaths to give proof of their mortal vulnerability.

New Day Magazine (September 22, 1986)

READING THE CRACKED PARCHMENT

Customarily we read a text, whether historical document or literary piece, solely in terms of the written word and what it conveys. In ancient times, the word engraved on stone or inscribed on papyrus held a magical force and potency. The word was valued for its visible qualities; it was positive matter and measurable substance, black against the empty void of white.

Our empirical approach to the text has its parallel in the visual arts, in painting and sculpture. For a long time, the viewer gave value only to the figures, with the background serving as but a foil or neutral element in which the figures moved and the objects marked their places. It was the traditional Asian cultures, most especially China, which had perceived meaning in the visual arts growing out of the dynamic interaction of figure as calligraphic gesture or object and the surrounding and interpenetrating space. In Taoist philosophy, space is not empty void but filled with spirit.

This perception arrived later in the West, for in the Anglo-

European cultural tradition it had long been the tendency to abstract the figures, as though they were no more than cut-outs, from the ground and to focus attention on these solely. The development of the perception of figure-ground relationship came with Einstein who brought out the interrelationship or relativity of figures in relation to one another and to their surrounding space. Henri Matisse in his diaries was of the view that expression in art did not reside in gestures alone — of which an entire repertoire was evolved in the classical tradition — but in the shapes themselves and in the intervals between them as well, pictorial unity growing out of the interaction of the positive and negative shapes.

This new way of seeing finds its correspondences in other human disciplines such as history, literature, and criticism. Recently, William Henry Scott in *Cracks in the Parchment Curtain* proposed a reading of the historical text that goes beyond the opacity of the written or printed text to explore the “cracks in the parchment,” its interstices of meaning. In response to the late historian Agoncillo’s belief in the impossibility of writing a real history of the Filipino people under Spain because the colonial government had a monopoly on the production of texts as source materials, William Henry Scott offers more optimistic prospects. For Scott, the activity of the scholar of colonial history, and of history in general, lies in examining not, in the first place, a perfect and seamless narrative, but its cracks and fissures. Through these one can catch precious glimpses of the Filipinos and their authentic responses to colonial domination; in these can be discovered “the stuff that the parchment curtain hides from us” — the participation of the people in their own destiny.

While the official histories bearing the stamp of the colonial bureaucracy enhanced the glory of Imperial Spain and extolled the deeds of the conquistadores who were duly rewarded with *encomiendas*, the historian, Scott says, must patiently go over the ground and probe it for chinks, fissures and weaknesses that suggest the ill-concealed truth and reveal the reactions and movements of the dominated

populations. This activity involves the search for "incidental intelligence," the valuable insights captured from behind the opacity and conscious intentionality of the text.

Thus Scott writes: "One of the values of original documents is that they often contain data which their authors included unintentionally or only in passing but which may be of greater historical revelation than what the authors wanted to say." As beginning example, he cites the passage in *The Art of Love* in which Ovid bewailed the avarice of the female golddiggers of his day: "If you tell them you don't have as much money in the house as they're asking, they say they're willing to take a check." Certainly, beyond the interest of Ovid's universal complaint is the juicy morsel of information that checks were in use in Roman society 20,000 years ago. An engaging example from Philippine history is drawn from the Jesuit Father Francisco Alcina who wrote in 1668: "The gold they have now is very little in comparison to what they used to have in olden times, though I recall that once when I was marrying an important Visayan, she was wearing so much gold it made her stoop, and it seemed to me that it reached 25 pounds or more, which is a great weight for a 12-year old girl." Here the manifest content of the passage had to do with gold, its quantity and social use in the country, but it unintentionally lets slip the information that upper-class 17th century Visayan women married at a tender age.

Another example of a piece of information which managed to survive the screening process of colonial historiography is one colorful detail gleaned from published accounts of regional revolts from 1660 to 1661: that a certain Pedro Almazan of San Nicolas kept one set of chains in his house for every Spaniard in the province, an example used by the colonial ruling class to demonstrate the extent of native "depravity" and disloyalty, but the inverse of which raises the question as to how many unrecorded Filipinos of the temper of Pedro Almazan there were during the Spanish conquest.

Such an approach to history would achieve in constructing

a "history of the inarticulate" which historian Renato Constantino had earlier proposed, a history which would reflect the authentic sentiments and anticolonial struggle of the masses through time and changes of regime, as against the official histories of the colonial establishment and the native ruling classes, the landed *ilustrados*, even up to the commissioned histories of the American-sponsored Marcos dictatorship. Such a history would be free from the colonial stereotypes that have distorted the image of the Filipino. Likewise, such a history would particularly explore the areas in which the official histories remain silent, or in which only sparse data exist, because these have mainly to do with the "inarticulate majority" rather than with the deeds and projects of the dominant classes. Indeed, we are only too painfully aware of the uses of history by oppressive regimes who seek to legitimize and maintain their domination and by ruling classes who would perpetuate unjust social relations. With our long historical experience of oppression, it is historiography such as proposed by William Henry Scott which can construct the true history of the people and stand in behalf of their interests against the oppressor.

This approach to history which examines the text not only in its textual solidity and manifest body, but also, and even more so, in terms of its cracks, gaps, and fissures has its equivalence in current themes of critical analysis. This "symptomatic reading" concerns itself particularly with the lacunae, hiatuses and silences of the text — with the text's "unsaid," which is also the "unconscious" of the text, its "blind spot" by which it cannot know itself.

Freudian psychoanalysis, from which the concept originated, distinguishes between the "uppermost dream layer" which is relatively continuous in its narrative and the deeper self-divided text of the dream itself which is marked by mutilations and discontinuities and which resists interpretation. It is in this deeper layer that the problem lies, and it is for the analyst not to smooth out the contradictions of the dream-text — but to lay bare the mechanism of its distortion and fragmentation.

Norman Geras clarifies this approach in connection with his discussion of the concept of the *problematic*, a term in criticism defined as "the objective internal reference system of its particular themes, the system of questions commanding the answers given." He writes: "The problematic, by determining what it includes within its field, thereby necessarily determines what is excluded therefrom. The concepts which are excluded (absences, lacunae), and the problems which are not posed adequately (semisilences, lapses), are therefore as much a part of the problematic as are the concepts and problems that are present. And it cannot for that reason be grasped by a simple literal or immediate reading of the text. Rather it must be reached by a 'symptomatic reading' where the explicit discourse is read conjointly with the absences, lacunae, and silences, which, constituting a second 'silent discourse,' are so many symptoms of the problematic buried in the text."

The practice of "symptomatic reading" is likewise central to Macherey's critical theory which propounds the dialectics of the spoken and the unspoken: "What is important in the work is what it does not say. This is not same as the careless notation 'what it refuses to say,' although that would in itself be interesting: a method might be built on it, with the task of *measuring silences*, whether acknowledged or unacknowledged. But rather than this, what the work *cannot say* is important, because there the elaboration of the utterance is acted out, in a sort of journey to silence."

The exposure of the mechanism of distortion and fragmentation corresponds to the central process of laying bare the ideology of the text, both in the sense of distorting "false consciousness" and in the more general sense of a system of received ideas reflecting a class orientation. As Eagleton writes, "Ideology is present in the text in the form of its eloquent silences." Ideology as class bias accounts for the silent stretches and gaps of the historical narrative. Of this, William Henry Scott is well aware when he writes that 19th century documents are filled with information on the introduction of foreign capital and the development of

export crops, as well as activities centering around the lives and governmental affairs of the colonial rulers, whereas little is written on the resistance of the indigenous populations and the suppressive measures used to put down their rebellions, as these constituted the negative side of the colonial ledger and did little ideologically to advance the cause of empire. The same is true in the literary text, for the writer is all too often circumscribed by his ideology and class interests which define the outer limits of his work, outside of which lies an enviroing silence.

It thus becomes the task of the reader and student in history and literature, in a symptomatic reading, to mark the fissures, the discontinuities of the work, not however, to smooth the contradictions, but to lay them bare so as to expose their ideological underpinnings. In history, where the silences are pregnant with suppressed energies, it is for the student to give these silences a voice and to initiate their engagement in a dialectical exchange with the text, for only by doing so can we be free from the tyranny of the pharaonic texts and arrive at the truth.

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IDEOLOGY IN CRITICISM

Basic to the criticism of people's literature is the dual premise that the literary work, as well as literary criticism itself, is grounded in a particular society and historical period, on one hand, and that literature as all art, possesses a relative autonomy and specificity, on the other hand. It follows then that criticism is not defined in terms of tenets that are projected to be universal, absolute, and true for all men and for all time, as the classical idealist outlook holds, but is shaped by values, concerns, and considerations specific to its particular society and time. Since the values of literary criticism derive from its social grounding, it becomes most pertinent to begin by understanding and analyzing the society in which it takes root. To this end, basic questions are raised: What is the society's mode of production? What is the history of the society, its major periods and conjunctures? What are the prevailing conditions of literary and artistic production?

From these, one can proceed to deal with four aspects or levels in the criticism of people's literature. These are 1) to reveal the underlying relationship between the literary work and its society and historical period, 2) to bring out the ideology of the text, 3) to analyze the form of the work and to show how it realizes meaning and ideology, and 4) to determine and evaluate the partisanship of the work. These levels of criticism are, of course, highly interrelated.

The first level of critical practice sets itself the task of revealing and demonstrating the relationship of the work, in both its content and form, to its society and historical period. This requires a thorough understanding of the society and period — the economic, political, and ideological relationships in which the work is situated — to be able to contextualize the text's references and allusions, ideas, cultural trends, values, attitudes, and its very form. No doubt, the relationship of literature and society is not a direct, one-to-one correspondence, but one which involves complex and interrelated levels of mediation. The fundamental relationship to class interests within the relations of production is overdetermined by numerous factors: the artist's family background, psychological make-up and temperament, personal fund of experience, training and education, personal use of language, the important events and issues of the day, significant influences, fashions in art and literature, patterns of literary and artistic patronage, conditions of literary production, the dominant world view. Because of the operation of numerous overdeterminations, the author's class origin does not directly and automatically correspond to his class sympathies in a symmetrical manner. It is this level of criticism which lays bare the social and historical determinants of the work, thus breaking down the bourgeois myth of the absolute autonomy of literature and art.

An important aspect of this level is the matter of the public of literature. The great unevenness in the development of the reading public in our country today — a condition which does not obtain in the highly industrialized

countries of the First World — is typical of poor Third World countries with a history of colonial exploitation. The cities function as centers of the comprador economy inserted into the world market, while the countryside engaged in the production of raw materials for export and agro-industrial products for multinational corporations stagnates in semi-feudal relations.

This uneven development which is a prevailing condition of literary production in this country is an important concern in the area of people's literature and criticism. It is a condition which points to two implications. The first is that people's literature and criticism must begin by reckoning with the fact of the low literacy level of the large number of Filipinos in the countryside due to poverty and the lack of educational opportunities. Necessarily, programs of people's literature become linked to a literacy campaign and with it, the liberating of political consciousness through literacy. On this level, people's literature, in association with the literacy drive, assumes an educational function both in drawing the people to read and, through literature, in making the people understand their true conditions. Thus, the range of people's literature will include simple written forms and the more complex and developed. When urban progressive writers and organized elements in the countryside help in the groundwork for literacy, a solid base for literature will be laid down at the same time that the people are engaged in the struggle for liberation from exploitation and foreign domination that are at the root of their poverty.

It follows that the second implication of the uneven development of the public of literature is the necessity for the raising of standards. This holds true for the literary works addressed to the different kinds of reading public in the cities and the countryside. The raising of standards becomes called for when a sufficient degree of popularization has taken place. This involves not only setting higher demands of technical excellence but also raising the level of ideological and political consciousness. In fully developed works with a richness of lived content and a refinement of

form, the relation between literature and the educative function becomes highly mediated and indirect. Nonetheless, art always involves cognition in that it helps us to understand the world and our material conditions. And since, in our present case, understanding reality and taking moves to change it acquire a powerful urgency, people's literature at this point necessarily has an underlying educative orientation.

Of course, an important factor in the conditions of literary production in the country today is the ongoing Aquino government's "total war" and the people's armed revolution. While literature may continue to be produced with some degree of leisure in the cities, it is produced and disseminated under conditions of extreme stress and threat to life in the countryside. Censorship in this regime is implicit in the fact that it brands certain texts as "subversive". In addition, vigilante groups proliferating in the countryside with state support have harassed drama groups and cultural workers in line with the US-sponsored LIC. Doubtless, these conditions create difficulties for the production, dissemination, and popularization of people's literature.

The second level of critical practice brings out the text's ideology as it is linked to conflicting class interests in the society's relations of production, either by affirming and maintaining the status quo in firming up its legitimations and cementing over its cracks, or by challenging the status quo in promoting radical change. This enterprise may not be as simple as it seems, for ideology is not something to be extracted bodily from the text. Rather than a simple line or motif which runs through the text like a colored strand, ideology in literature is complex, multileveled, and finely-nuanced. Moreover, it has to do not only with the content of literature but with its form as well.

But first, one has to address the question: What is ideology? Shedding the negative sense of "false consciousness" or distortion, ideology has evolved into a positive concept.

Thus, ideology may be defined as a system of political, legal, ethical, aesthetic, religious, and philosophical ideas and values that ultimately serve the interest of some class or group. It belongs to the superstructure and as such is determined in the last instance by the economic, i.e., the relations of production, at the same time that it acts reciprocally on the material base by hindering, retarding, or hastening historical change. In the Gramscian definition, ideology is a "conception of the world that is implicitly manifest in art, in law, in economic activity and in all manifestations of individual and collective life," as it is also a "terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle." Furthermore, ideology holds the capacity to inspire and provide orientation for action. Thus, it is through ideology that a class can exercise hegemony in society.

In the final analysis, there are two fundamental ideologies or ideological discourses linked to the two basic classes: the conservative bourgeois and the revolutionary proletarian ideology. These ideological discourses are made up of ideological elements which, on their own, have no necessary class-belonging, but which, upon their articulation into these discourses, acquire a class connotation through the articulating principle of the discourse which is its class interest. Among these ideological elements are nationalism, democracy, populism, feminism, etc. Their contents are determined and defined by the class interest of the discourse into which they are articulated and they can be thus articulated into antagonistic discourses in which they assume different contents or emphases — and particularized by the society's material conditions and history. Bourgeois discourse creates mystifications, neutralizes and contains the radical potential of these ideological elements; revolutionary proletarian discourse draws out their full radical potential. Within these ideological discourses are ideological subensembles, such as aesthetics, which has its own relatively autonomous structure of concepts and values, but which is nevertheless historically-

situated and ultimately linked to class interests.

Criticism, then, necessarily involves the development of a finely-honed sensitivity to ideology and its expressions in the text. Thus, a close study may reveal the operation of the dominant traditional ideology or of the emergent oppositional ideology. More specifically, there is an authorial ideology which is ideology filtered through an individual consciousness and given a personal formulation, and an aesthetic ideology which is the artist's philosophy of art as realized in his work. These ideologies are ultimately class-related, and since social classes are not static categories but interact in dynamic opposition, these ideologies are to be viewed in a relational manner as they counter and oppose each other in the particular terms of a society and historical period.

Thus, in the Philippine context, the feudal mode of production gave rise to ideological elements such as personalism and paternalism, as well as forms of extraeconomic coercion, such as a religion of subservience, which serve to maintain traditional privilege. Colonialism and imperialism have likewise given rise to particular ideological expressions which favor foreign values (particularly those of foreign monopoly capital) over national values and interests. Furthermore, the State, through the different governments and regimes in history, formulates its ideologies, ideological state apparatuses, and cultural programs, complete with a system of rewards and incentives, towards the end of maintaining and upholding its hegemony in society. Each regime projects its own ideological climate — that of the Marcos regime with its airy classical absolutes of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty, differs from that of the Aquino government which draws heavily on traditional Catholicism and disseminates the Reagan fundamentalist black-and-white ideology. All these levels on which ideology operates have a bearing on the literary work.

Because of our history of colonization, nationalism is a salient ideological element in Philippine culture as in other Third World countries. In order to grasp the ideological

import of nationalism, it is necessary to investigate it in the context of the different ideological discourses into which it is articulated. The bourgeois-comprador discourse which, along with feudal aspects, often coincides with the State discourse, foregrounds cultural categories such as "national heritage" and "national identity" in the strategy of using nationalism to efface social contradictions and conflicting interests, thereby creating an artificial unity. The articulating principle of the discourse, which is the class interest of the big landlord-comprador ruling elite, confers on nationalism this particular meaning. Nationalism, however, is also articulated into the progressive revolutionary (national democratic) discourse. While this discourse also provides for the "national heritage" and "national identity" categories, it foregrounds political contents. On one level, the concept of nationalism aligns the workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie, national bourgeoisie which all belong to the category of "people" in the antiimperialist struggle versus the "power bloc" which is the ruling class that is at the same time the agent-facilitator of US monopoly capital. On a second level, nationalism here connotes the espousal of the interests of the oppressed majority of the Filipinos, the masses headed by the workers in close alliance with the peasants and with the progressive section of the petty bourgeoisie, vis-a-vis the small minority of big landlord-comprador elites in the context of the class struggle. It is in this discourse that nationalism as an ideological element is able to realize its full radical potential, not only because of its anti-imperialist emphasis, but more importantly because it is defined within the socialist perspective.

In people's literature, then, the meaning of nationalism is drawn from the progressive-revolutionary discourse. It is this liberative meaning of nationalism which distinguishes the works of people's literature from those of an elite or *ilustrado* ruling class nationalism or of a simple nationalism based on the criterion of nationality regardless of political consciousness. Doubtless, the ideology of people's literature is based on the espousal of the interests of the people for

national sovereignty and true independence, and on the interests of the broad masses in their aspirations for a just and truly human order. It follows that people's literature derives its material from the experiences of the people in struggle in the cities and in the countryside, from the daily challenges that they face. Often these experiences are part of the war situation created by the counterrevolutionary campaign of the Marcos and Aquino regimes now intensified by the LIC directed by the Pentagon and the CIA. From the struggle emerges a literature produced by urban and grass-roots writers that crystallizes the people's experience and renders it back to them.

Because of the contradictions, dissensions, and schisms that arise from the opposing interests of groups and classes in society, and because of possible conflicts in the consciousness of the writer, the ideology of texts in general may not always be found as a unified and integral whole. Texts with an overall progressive thrust may show certain contradictions, and those that are apparently bourgeois in outlook may not have an altogether placid ideology. Contradictions may well exist in the literary text, but the critic's task is not to "smooth the contradictions of the text" (Eagleton), nor is it to reconstitute the various elements to form a functional unity and to prepare the text as a commodity to be consumed; it is, on the contrary, to point out the contradictions of the text which thus reveals itself as an active terrain of ideological contention. These contradictions are not in themselves flaws although they do not allow the work to come together into a harmonious whole, but they give evidence of the artist's own ideological struggle and of the dynamic relationship of literature to society with its schisms, dissensions, and conflicts. In some texts, one may be able to discern the manifest and conscious ideology from its hidden and latent ideological sympathies, so that a text may be ideologically conservative on its conscious surface, but progressive on a deeper level. Macherey has proposed, beyond the traditional reading of a text, a "symptomatic reading" in which the meaning is derived from the dialectical interplay between

the manifest text and its gaps, silences, and unsaids that are the symptoms of ideological concealment.

Rather than labelling texts simply as "bourgeois," "progressive," or "revolutionary," the critic needs to have a keen sense of the shades and nuances of ideological meaning. The truly conservative text may manifest varying strategies of "containing" reality and consciousness within closed perimeters, thereby reaffirming and fortifying the traditional structures that it advances as true for all men and for all time. It is for the critic to identify these strategies and the terms in which they are couched. Other texts open out into large avenues of human possibility and thus contain a radical potential. Part of the critic's task is thus to assess the relative closure or openness of a text, and, if possible, to project its radical potential as well as draw out its contradictions to their full implications.

Indeed, the meaning of a work cannot be paraphrased or reduced to a unilinear statement. Ideology permeates or saturates the text thoroughly and profoundly. It is encoded in its forms and conventions, embodied in the characters with their class origins, qualities, conflicts, self-images, and complex interrelationships; in the narrative with its conflicts, complications, and resolutions; in the ideas, values and attitudes revealed in the choices made, the actions, dialogues, and authorial interventions; in the presentation of the social and historical context, in the point of view or points of view of the work, in the form and structure of the literary work, in its very language or languages and idioms. And, of course, after an analysis of the text's ideology, one proceeds to ask how, in the last instance, it reflects or espouses the interests of a particular class, group, or faction within a society's relations of production.

This leads to the assertion that art or truth in art cannot be above ideology. Truth, since it finds verification in facts and is formed in the continual dialectics of theory and practice, is not an absolute and idealist category above social and historical circumstance. And art, while it has relative autonomy in the superstructure is, in the last analysis, linked

to fundamental class interests. The literary work may indeed go beyond the interests of the author's own class to espouse the interests of another class. But literature or art, no matter how highly mediated, cannot go beyond ideology into a transcendent and neutral realm where it is cut off from its moorings in the productive relations of society.

The third level of critical practice has to do with the analysis of the form of the work, its structure and internal devices, its formal conventions, and with the investigation of the processes by which its particular form produces ideological meaning. Traditionally, a categorical distinction was made between form and content, and with form simply considered as a neutral vessel for content. Aesthetics, likewise, was also construed as having to do with the formal aspects and qualities of the work alone. And the customary formula for the relationship of form and content was the "unity of political content with excellent artistic form."

First of all, form in art and literature is not a mere neutral vessel of meaning, for it likewise takes root in social and historical circumstance. The different literary forms and genres make their appearance in particular historical periods and convey the concepts, values, priorities, indeed, ideologies of their time and place. The appearance or disappearance of certain forms may coincide with the shifts in art patronage due to economic change, while new patrons create new demands and fashions. Form itself is a bearer of ideology. A classical form such as the sonnet belongs to the classical world-view and conveys its values of order and measure.

It has been a mystification of bourgeois aesthetics to define aesthetics as the realm of form alone, thus isolating and reifying it and bracketing out the meanings that reality brings to art, when, in fact, content, meaning and its production are central problems of aesthetics as the philosophy of art. Then, too, the statement of the unity of high political content and excellence in form must necessarily imply the vigorous and continuing dialectical interplay of the two.

More than this, form is not mere style and technique that can be analyzed independently of meaning, but the very

choice of form, formal structure, devices in language are part of the meaning of the work and belong to an ideological structure. Form itself is value-laden. As a conveyor of meaning, it grows out of a society with its contending forces and conveys the values and priorities that arise therefrom. Since form has to do with style, technique, linguistic and literary devices, as well as formal structure, it is also necessarily concerned with the development of technical expertise, following the demands of the particular literary form, whether poetry, the novel, the short story, as well as traditional or popular forms, written or oral. But again, it cannot exist for its own sake alone or as an autonomous practice, but is inseparable from the production of meaning and ideology.

One of the important areas of people's criticism concerns traditional literary forms that appeared in earlier periods, such as the *awit* and *corido*, *moro-moro* and *zarzuela*. With respect to these, one asks: Is the formula "giving new content to old forms" universally applicable? Or can there at times arise a problematic discrepancy between form and content in which a traditional form bearing the values and sensibilities or an earlier period can ill contain the contemporary content given it in a revival of the form? In this respect, the matter of the unevenness of the local public of literature may come into consideration. Be that as it may, traditional forms are an important part of people's literature. The body of folk traditions makes up what Gramsci called the "national-popular culture" the forms and symbols of which are the object of contention between opposing class interests seeking to articulate these into their respective discourses. What is probably called for in this respect is to make an assessment of the radical potential of the traditional forms and their capacity to contain contemporary political meaning without serious discrepancies between form and content.

Our general literary tradition, one might easily state, is predominantly realist as the public has for the most part demanded and expected a literature vividly portraying

people and life in such a way that they elicit the full empathy of the common reader who tends to judge literature by its capacity, through its verisimilitude, to make people laugh and cry. Even more, the pressures of contemporary reality are felt at their most intense at the present because we are, in one way or another, caught up and involved in the revolutionary process on all fronts.

In the context of people's literature, realism is not construed to be a mere passive reflection of society because it also bears within it at the same time the projection of a new human order. Likewise, realism is not set in opposition to innovative forms, as realism itself has its own development, is not static, and can give rise to different modes. The Brechtian "alienation effect" derived from the "defamiliarization theory" of the Russian Formalists may also make a significant contribution to people's literature. In theater, it may successfully be employed to break down the traditional dichotomy of performers and audience, open out possibilities of democratic audience participation in theater as creative process, as well as demystify traditional elitist concepts of the writer and literature by baring the process of the text.

Experiments in form certainly have a place in people's literature, though again, these experiments and innovations cannot be isolated from the production of values and ideologies. Interesting developments can be found in grassroots cultural work in the wide range of forms that enter into people's literature: personal accounts and histories or "testimonial literature," comics, *composos* or Visayan ballads that serve as folk chronicles of the people's struggle, among others.

Language likewise enters into considerations of form. The national language, as an important aspect of our cultural identity, should serve as the basis of our national literature, without, however, killing the vernacular languages and while at the same time recognizing the contributions to people's literature of 19th century progressive works written in Spanish and recent progressive-revolutionary works in

English. In these texts, one may have to do, not necessarily with the extrinsic employment of a foreign language, but with its internalized appropriation into a progressive discourse.

Language, to be sure, is a tool and medium of communication, and more than the simple use of the national language, it is important that it be infused with liberative content. This is especially urgent because the use of the national language lends a populist character to the text, hence bearing a strong appeal to the masses. The well-funded reactionary manipulators of ideology know this only too well and their strategies involve the use of the national language and folk traditions under the guise of nationalism in order to disseminate the most backward antipeople ideology to the masses. Even language has become a medium of contention between the liberative forces and those aggressively seeking to create a firm base for US interests. Language is fast becoming politicized. All the more is there an urgent necessity to significantly enlarge the body of works written in the national language with a progressive-revolutionary content so that this meaning will be indelibly fused with the language and that the national language spoken and written will inspire liberative values and the aspiration to create a free and just society.

The fourth level of criticism — and we have qualified this from the outset as “committed criticism” as against traditional criticism, in the same way that we speak of the “committed writer or artist” and of literature “committed to the people’s cause” — involves the evaluation of the partisanship of the literary work. But let us first particularly situate this level of critical practice within the context of contemporary Philippine history in this critical juncture in which the people are actively engaged in a life-and-death struggle for liberation against feudal structures and imperialist domination. This immediate setting for literature and criticism makes the ideological-political criterion even more pressing than at other times, for now, in the crucible of history, the writer can ill adapt or maintain a neutral stance, suspend judgment,

or keep a safe "political distance."

After bringing out the underlying relationship between the literary work and its society and historical period, analyzing the ideology of the text, investigating the form of the work and showing how it produces meaning and ideology, the critic now evaluates its partisanship. Evidently, this last level of critical practice is not a simple exercise of separating the sheep from the goats. We think of ideological meanings as forming a spectrum from the outright reactionary bourgeois through degrees of bourgeois reformist liberalism and elite or naive forms of nationalism to radical partisanship with the people and the proletariat. Aware of possible contradictions between manifest and latent ideological content, the critic determines the work's "horizon of meaning" or ideological parameters and draws out, whenever possible, the extent of the radical potential of the literary work. This process can be likewise applicable to examples of folk literature, such as the Trickster's Tales, of which the critic can draw out their radical potential in terms of their oppositional stance and strategies vis-a-vis the ruling class and traditional authority, if not actually politicize the text. In the case of progressive-revolutionary texts, criticism does not involve the simple process of "extracting the political line" but rather charting out the ramifications and nuances of their ideology as it is produced in the various elements of the text, as it is reproduced in other texts of the author in an intertextual analysis, and as it is related to the economic and political system which they seek to change.

Moreover, the ideological meanings of literary texts are likewise viewed as relative to their historical and social contexts, so that while these meanings may hold true for a particular period and mode of production, they may be modified or realigned ideologically in the course of the historical process. Thus, a work which is progressive in the context of its time may clearly reveal its ideological limitations with respect to the productive relations of a later mode.

Finally, as ideology becomes translated into politics in the arena of praxis, the critic has to reckon with the political effects of the work. In the context of the present struggle, towards what political attitudes, espousals, and practices does the literary work lead the reader, whether directly or indirectly, implicitly or explicitly? In this question lies the difference between safeguarding the traditional interests of the dominant class of foreign monopoly capital, and contributing to advance the legitimate causes of the people towards realizing their full humanity in a free and just order and in which present historic struggle everyone plays his chosen role.

IDEOLOGY AND CONSCIOUSNESS

1. What is ideology?

Though Marx did not explicitly define ideology, its meaning and definition can be derived from various Marxist texts. Thus, ideology is a system of political, legal, ethical, aesthetic, religious, and philosophical ideas and values that serve the interest of some class or group. It belongs to the superstructure and as such is ultimately determined by the economic, i.e., the relations of production, at the same time that it acts reciprocally on the material base by retarding or hastening historical change.

In the *Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy*, Marx brought out the distinction "between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production. . . and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic, or philosophic — in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out."¹

In *The German Ideology*, ideology is linked to class rule: "The ideas of the ruling class are, in every age, the ruling ideas; the class which is the dominant material force in

society is at the same time its dominant intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that in consequence, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are, in general, subject to it."² From this comes the principle that ideas are determined by and express the fundamental structure of society. Likewise, ideas have a semblance of autonomy and independence which conceals their determination by the production relations of society. It is part of their ideological practice that the dominant class through its institutions gives its ideas and ideologies the form of universality and represents them as the only reasonable and valid ones for all men and for all time. The internalization of ruling class ideas takes on the appearance of "common sense" and as "traditional popular conceptions of the world." At the same time, new forces in struggle give rise to an ideology that challenges the dominant class.

In the *Poverty of Philosophy* is found the principle that ideas are socially and historically situated; that they are not absolute or static but change with the historical process: "The same men who establish their social relations in conformity with their material productivity, produce also principles, ideas, and categories in conformity with their social relations. Thus, these ideas, these categories, are as little eternal as the relations they express. They are historical and transitory products."³

There, is, however, a negative connotation of ideology in which it is associated with "false consciousness" and "illusion". On a number of occasions, Engels used ideology in this negative and limited sense. In a letter to Franz Mehring, he wrote: "Ideology is a process accomplished by the so-called thinker consciously, it is true, but with a false consciousness. The real motive force impelling him remain unknown to him; otherwise it would not be an ideological process."⁴ In this negative sense, all ideology is false consciousness, a system of illusions and false ideas as contrasted

with true and scientific knowledge. But Marxist texts such as the *Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy* which brings up the concept of the ideological struggle, and later contributions to theory such as Gramsci's definition of ideology as "the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle," as well as current usage in socialist countries, favor its broad definition. Thus, one speaks of the revolutionary working class ideology and the bourgeois ideology which are the two fundamental ideological systems.

Ideology is not completely synonymous with world-view or *Weltanschauung* which is a system of beliefs, values, etc. in a particular society, community or group in a particular historical period, for while the ideology of a dominant class includes its *Weltanschauung*, ideology itself is a functioning part of the system of rule of a class.

How is ideology related to truth? In the framework of Marxist social science which is the core of revolutionary proletarian ideology, truth is constituted continually in the active encounter of theory and practice, and is not a static, eternal category as in bourgeois ideology. This is clearly stated in the *Theses on Feuerbach*: "The question whether objective truth is an attribute of human thought — is not a theoretical but a practical question. Man must prove the truth, i.e., the reality and power, the 'this-sidedness' of his thinking in practice. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking that is isolated from practice is a purely scholastic question. . . The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways, the point is to change it."⁵

2. How is ideology, or the superstructure in general, related to the material base?

The relationship of superstructure to material base or fundamental structure is described in a number of Marxist texts. In the *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx wrote: "Upon the different forms of property, upon the social conditions of existence, rises an entire superstructure

of distinct and peculiarly formed sentiments, illusions, modes of thought and views of life. The whole class forms them out of the corresponding social relations."⁶ This concept is further elaborated on in the Introduction to the *Critique of Political Economy*: "The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society — the real foundation on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the social, political, and intellectual life processes in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness. . . With the change of the economic foundation, the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations a distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic, or philosophical — in short, ideological — forms in which men become conscious of their conflict and fight it out."⁷

Stuart Hall, in his study of "The 'Political' and the Economic" in Marx's Class Theory" posits that rather than "economic" in a broad and more obvious sense, it is the "material and social conditions of existence" which "determines." According to Hall, the term "economic" has been used to designate two different things: "the relations and forces of the mode of production and the site of those practices and forms of struggle which have economic relations (e.g. conditions of work, or wages) as their specific object."⁸ Rather than the second sense of the economic, it is the first, "the relations and forces of the mode of production," which has the final determinacy.

Basic to Marxism is the principle of the determination in the last instance by the (economic) relations of production of the political and ideological levels of the superstructure.

On the other hand, the reciprocal action of the superstructure on the base is expressed in the *Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of the Right*: "The weapon of criticism cannot of course, replace criticism of the weapon, material force must be overthrown by material force but theory also becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses."⁹ And although *The German Ideology*, which is the philosophical idealism of Marx's time speaks of "ideological reflexes," "echoes," and "phantoms" in the brain, it also contains a theory of revolution that stresses the need for the transformation of man's awareness which is also self-liberating and creates, not only religions and philosophies, but also states. In his famous manifesto, Marx wrote: "When people speak of ideas that revolutionize society, they do but express the fact that, within the old society the elements of a new one have been created, and that the dissolution of the old ideas keeps even pace with the dissolution of the old conditions of existence."¹⁰

Engels, writing to J. Bloch, stressed the determining role of material production in historical change, while refusing a reductionist interpretation by pointing out that while production is the ultimately determining element, it is not the only determining one: "According to the materialist conception of history, the ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than this, neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence, if somebody twists this into saying that the economic is the only determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase."¹¹ Engels affirms that the various elements of the superstructure, political forms of the class struggle, including constitutions, juridical forms, philosophical theories, religious views "also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form." In the same text he refers to traditions and continuities in the superstructure which men engaged in making history must reckon with: "We make our history ourselves, but, in the first place, under very

definite assumptions and conditions. Among these, the economic ones are ultimately decisive. But the political ones, etc., and indeed even the traditions that haunt human minds also play a part, although not the decisive one." Likewise, the term "material base" or "material conditions of life" is not a mere synonym of the economic. The material base refers to the fundamental conditions of production including human nature and hereditary endowment, the natural environment and geography. In the same manner, "social being" contains both class and a large number of nonclass factors. In his labor, man is a productive agent in creative interaction with nature. The reference to concrete and particular conditions and to traditions implies the underlying national character of revolutionary movements in different parts of the world. The base must not simply be viewed as a general category but grasped in its specific historical form.

In a letter to Mehring, Engels goes beyond the statement of the relationship of base to superstructure to express concern as to the manner and process by which superstructural elements arise from the base — the "formal" aspect of the relationship: "We all laid and were bound to lay the main emphasis at first on the derivation of political, legal, and other ideological notions from the basic economic facts. But in doing so, we neglected the formal side — the way in which these notions come about."¹²

This concern as to how production relations ultimately determine the superstructure — or the passage of the class struggle in the mode of production to the level of the complex superstructure — has to do with defining the relationship which the economy as base and the superstructural levels, the political and the ideological, have with respect to each other. While the *Manifesto* seems to imply a one-to-one correspondence, later writings such as the *Eighteenth Brumaire* and the *Civil War in France* break away entirely from the mechanical correspondence of base and superstructure, the symmetrical alignment of the levels in

contents, and the relationship of passive reflection. What was essential was to depart from the notion of class as an integral bloc which is duplicated symmetrically at the political and ideological levels. Even earlier, in *The German Ideology*, is found the perception of class fractions with ideological differences which may develop into inter-class antagonisms. Later, in the *Eighteenth Brumaire*, Marx brilliantly analyzed "the formation of complex alliances based on class fractions, their internal contradictions, the 'necessity' of the political positions, temporary programmes and ideological forms in which those interests appear — for each moment of the conjuncture of Brumaire."¹³

Mao Zedong discusses the relationship of base and superstructure within the framework of the universal principle of contradiction. He rejects a static or mechanical materialist conception of the contradiction of base and superstructure and emphasizes the necessity of a truly dialectical materialist formulation: "True, the productive forces, practice and the economic base generally play the principal and decisive role. . . But it also must be admitted that in certain conditions, such aspects as the relations of production, theory and the superstructure in turn manifest themselves in the principal and decisive role. . . When the superstructure (politics, culture, etc.) obstructs the development of the economic base, political and cultural changes become principal and decisive."¹⁴ Mao Zedong moreover recognizes the unevenness and asymmetry of the facets of a contradiction: "Nothing in this world develops absolutely evenly; we must oppose the theory of even development or the theory of equilibrium. Moreover, it is these concrete features of a contradiction and the changes in the principal and non-principal aspects of a contradiction in the course of its development that manifest the force of the new superseding the old."¹⁵

The relationship between the (economic) relations of production and the superstructure can be described in terms of forms of causality. According to Louis Althusser, classical

theories of causality have two models. The first is linear, transitive, or mechanical causality which describes the effects of one element on another. Such an analysis treats classes as "whole" subjects, collective subjects or actors. The transposition of the class struggle from the economic to the political and ideological levels takes place as through an empty space, directly and without mediations or complex interconnections. An event at one level gives rise to a corresponding event at another level in a mechanistic manner.

The second model is expressive or teleological causality which describes the effect of the whole on the parts, but only by making the latter an "expression of the former, a phenomenon or a moment" in the unfolding of its essence. "It conceives a capitalist social formation as essentially a simple structure — a structure whose immediate forms may be complex, but whose dynamism and articulation is simple and essentialist: its articulation is basically 'given' by the terms of a single contradiction (force/relations of production) which unrolls unproblematically from the economic 'base', evenly throughout all its different levels, 'indifferently'."¹⁶

To these two modes of causality, Althusser added a third: structural causality. A key to this mode is his statement that "Marx has at least given us the 'two ends of the chain' and has told us to find out what goes on between them: on the one hand, determination in the last instance by the (economic) mode of production; on the other, the relative autonomy of the superstructures and their specific effectivity."¹⁷ Now, a social formation has three levels or instances: the economic, which is the base, and the political and the ideological, which are the two levels of the superstructure. Each level is a structure with its own relative autonomy and specificity, its own rhythm of development, internal history, conditions of existence, and its multiplicity of contradictions. These structures are not evenly or symmetrically aligned in such a way that a rupture or break in the base will effect a similar and simultaneous event at the

other levels. At a specific point in time called a "conjuncture," these levels of the economic, political, and ideological, show a complex and uneven relationship to each other. Lenin referred to the conjuncture of the Russian Revolution of 1917 which showed how "absolutely dissimilar currents, absolutely heterogenous class interests, absolutely contrary political and social strivings have merged. . . in a strikingly 'harmonious' manner" as the result of an "extremely unique historical situation."¹⁸ This fusion or condensation of all component elements and conditions is what Althusser called a "ruptural unity" and constitutes a crisis of class rule.

The historical conjuncture is said to be "overdetermined" because, although the (economic) relations of production are determining in the last instance, each level contributes its own determination to the structure as a whole and to the other levels, at the same time that it is determined in turn. A distinction is introduced between "dominant" and "determinant." For instance, under feudalism the ideological level was dominant in its role of extraeconomic coercion, but its dominance was itself determined by the economy which retained the final determinacy. Althusser stresses that it is the economy which determines which level or instance is dominant in a conjuncture. In structural causality, the structure is a cause present in its effects but existing only in their totality.

Unlike the Hegelian totality which "presupposes an original primary essence that lies behind the complex appearances that it has produced by externalization in history,"¹⁹ hence, a "structure with a centre," the Marxist totality of the social formation has elements that are asymmetrically related and relatively autonomous, one of them being dominant but each being determined and determining in turn, with the economy as determinant in the last instance. Its unity which merges "heterogenous currents" is not one of reduction but of a complex effect, a result of many determinations. The ensemble of the social formation is a "struc-

ture-in-dominance" as it is also a "decentred structure", because it has an uneven and asymmetrical character and because its multiplicity of contradictions is not reduced to a single contradiction — although, as one must reiterate, the contradiction at the material base provides the final determinacy.²⁰ This view brings out the complexity and relationality of the various levels in their many interconnecting mediations.

Norman Geras, in his assessment of Althusser's contribution, anticipates the question: "Is overdetermination to replace historical materialism by a sort of methodological pluralism?" The answer is no. "The autonomy of the superstructures is relative and not absolute, their specific effectivity does not eliminate the primacy of the economy which, for Althusser following Engels, is still determinant in the last instance." Political practice necessitates an exact understanding of the numerous contradictions and the situations which these produce: "The precise relations of domination and subordination between the different levels of the structure, the complex of contradictions which it embodies, their relative importance and reciprocal influence — all these must be grasped as defining the current conjuncture in which political action is to occur. Successful revolution is never the simple outcome of the economic contradiction between forces and relations of production. It requires the fusion or condensation of a multiplicity of contradictions, since it too is subject to the law of overdetermination."²¹ The principle of overdetermination and the "structure-in-dominance" are Althusser's main theoretical contributions, but many areas of his work show an unresolved tension between materialism and idealism.

It is in the relationship between material base and superstructure that distortions in Marxist theory take place. The Second International (1899-1914) headed by Kautsky and the revisionist Bernstein was known for its economicist interpretation which was the root cause of the defeats suffered by the German and Italian working class movements

in the decade following the First World War. Much of the polemics in this period involved the problem of economism. Lenin, in "What is to be done?" fought against the view that, since economic relations ultimately determine the forms and outcomes of the class struggle, therefore the struggle waged at the level of the economic was "the most widely applicable method of struggle." Calling the proposition the "quintessence of economism," Lenin analyzes its implications of corporatism in which the working class confines itself to the struggle "for better terms in the sale of their labour power, for better conditions of life and labour"¹² which leads directly to reformism.

At the level of ideology, economism takes two forms: epiphenomenalism and class reductionism. In epiphenomenalism, ideas and the contents of the ideological superstructure, including culture, are but reflexes, passive reflections, and faint echoes of events in the material base and are therefore of peripheral or of little significance to the class struggle. From this ensues the Second International's theory of the collapse of capitalism which states that the unfolding of the economic contradictions at the base would by itself necessarily and inevitably lead to the proletarian revolution and the collapse of capitalism. This implied that ideology did not have any autonomy whatsoever since the development of social consciousness was corollary to the numerical growth of the proletariat as a class and the exacerbation of economic contradictions. Socialist consciousness was also automatically identified as the necessary consciousness of members of the working class.

In opposition to epiphenomenalism, later Marxists like Gramsci and Althusser have upheld the relative autonomy of the superstructure. Even more, they advanced that ideology has its own material existence, its concrete practices and material production. According to Althusser, ideas are expressed in actions which are inserted in practices. These, in turn, are "governed" by rituals within the material existence of an ideological state apparatus, such as the church, school, family, the media, and various institutions and

foundations, both public and private. Through these ideological state apparatuses, ideology functions to secure the reproduction and continuity of the relations of production. Ideology — and specifically for Althusser, the dominant ruling class ideology — does this by creating a subjective consciousness that reconciles individuals to the system and to the class positions that they occupy within it and makes them voluntary agents.²³ The dominant class rules through these ideological state apparatuses and through the repressive state apparatus which is the military.

A specific example of relative autonomy can be found in art as a superstructural element. Art has its own specificity, i.e., its vocabulary, formal elements, practices and productions as a distinct area of human knowledge and as a form of signifying practice. At the same time, art is socially and historically situated and is linked to the economic relations of production through numerous and complex mediations. For instance, it shows the influence of the prevailing system of art patronage, as well as the society's level of technological development. It cannot but reflect the ownership of the means of production in culture and in production as a whole. Its relative autonomy is also expressed in the fact that it can act upon the material base as an agent of change.

Economism also takes the form of class reductionism which collapses the political and ideological instances of the social formation into the economic by reducing secondary contradictions to the terms of the principal contradiction in the material base. It makes ideology a function of the class position of subjects. It was particularly Antonio Gramsci who addressed this problem and developed a non-reductionist conception of ideology.

For his contribution to ideological theory, Gramsci (1891-1937) has been called the "theoretician of the superstructures". He has several points in common with Althusser: the material nature of ideology, its existence as a necessary level of all social formations, and its function as a producer of subjects. Gramsci broke away completely from the concept of ideology as: "false consciousness," i.e. a distor-

ted representation of reality, because it is determined by the place occupied by the subject in the relations of production.²⁴

Chantal Mouffe in a seminal article on "Ideology and Hegemony in Gramsci" systematizes his nonreductionist conception of ideology. Towards this project, she first identifies three principles underlying the reductionist problematic of ideology: 1) All subjects are class subjects, 2) Social classes have their own paradigmatic ideologies, and 3) All ideological elements have a necessary class-belonging. These propositions underlie class reductionist analysis.²⁵

To understand the first proposition, it is necessary to refer to the function of ideology as producing subjects and to the proposition that each level of the social formation — the economic, the political, and the ideological — likewise constitutes its own subjects, since these levels have a relative autonomy and specific effectivity. Now, the first assumes that all subjects, including those constituted at the political and ideological levels, are identical to the class subjects at the economic level defined by their position in the relations of production. In this case, ideology becomes a function of class position, and consciousness and class position are aligned in a neat one-to-one correspondence as the consciousness or ideology of a person necessarily reflects his class position. But, on the contrary, the subjects at the economic level are not duplicated at the political and ideological levels. Instead, different intra-class subjects are created in an asymmetrical and uneven relationship with the base. The other two reductionist propositions will be taken up in connection with how ideologies are constituted.

At the opposite pole of economism is superstructuralism, another distortion in the relationship of base and superstructure. This is found in Korsch and Lukacs for whom class consciousness is the basic constitutive moment of class as such. According to Lukacs in his *History and Class Consciousness*, the essential feature of capitalism is "commodity fetishism" which produces "reification" defined as "the

process through which relations between men take on the appearance of relations between things." Because of "rational mechanization" and "calculability" applied to every aspect of life, specialization of skills has developed leading to fragmentation and the loss of the totalizing perspective. As individuals, the members of the proletariat remain subject to the reified world of appearance, but as a class they are able to attain the viewpoint of the totality which is their class consciousness. This total consciousness of the proletariat is its "ascribed consciousness" which does not, however, coincide with the actual empiricist consciousness of the members of that class. For Lukacs, historical materialism is the ideological expression of the attempt of the proletariat to liberate itself, and it follows that for Lukacs, at least in his work, *History and Class Consciousness*, particularly in the essay "The Marxism of Rosa Luxemburg," "it is not the primacy of economic motives in historical explanation that constitutes the decisive difference between Marxism and bourgeois thought, but the point of view of totality, the category of totality, the all-pervasive supremacy of the whole over the parts is the essence of the method which Marx took over from Hegel and brilliantly transformed into the foundations of a wholly new science."²⁶ Lukacs broke out of historicist idealism in a subsequent work on Lenin in which, as Stedman Jones points out, "the Hegelian terminology, the identical subject-object consciousness vanish completely. Hostility to science is no longer present; Marxism itself is conceded proper scientific status. Even the term 'reification' is abandoned (although the notion is still present)."²⁷ Nevertheless, Lukacs' interpretation of the "ideological battle between capitalism and socialism as a conflict between formal analytic rationality and the viewpoint of the totality is to be found again and again in the works of later thinkers, among them Goldmann, Marcuse, and Sartre."²⁸

It is necessary to stress that the relationship of base and superstructure or of the material base and the two levels of the superstructure, the political and the ideological, is to be viewed as continually interactive and interpenetrating. In

fact, some elements which seem to be situated in either the base or the superstructure can be found equally present in both. Science and technology, while they are part of education in the superstructure, also belong to the material base in their role of expanding and promoting the development of the forces of production. Art, while it is generally situated in the superstructure, is ideally to be found also in the material base as when the worker in his liberation fully overcomes the alienation from the products of his labor and recovers his creativity.

Likewise, base and superstructure are not to be viewed as separable entities and categories which operate in a formal and sequential manner. Rather, they enter into a dynamic process involving the activities and products of real men existing in the real world. It is a process which has a specific historical character to be fully grasped in its concreteness.

3. How are ideologies constituted and transformed?

Gramsci saw ideologies not as static or fixed for all time but as continually being constituted in the historical process and expressing changing material conditions and intensifying contradictions in the material base. Social classes do not have closed paradigmatic ideologies with mutually exclusive elements. Consequently, ideological struggle is not viewed as the encounter of two ideological blocs and the drastic replacing of one with the other.

Ideology is linked to the class struggle and hegemonic expansion. Corresponding to the interests of the two fundamental classes, there are two basic ideological systems: the revolutionary working class ideology and the bourgeois ideology. The middle class or petty bourgeoisie is an intermediate class which is not directly engaged in basic production and as such cannot be a hegemonic class with its own distinct ideology. However, it can have ideological subensembles which are articulated into one or other basic systems.

Rejecting the reductionism in which social classes are

viewed as possessing paradigmatic ideologies, Gramsci instead maintained that ideologies are constituted by the process of disarticulation and rearticulation of ideological elements.²⁹ "Articulation" as a concept in ideological theory "requires the existence of non-class contents — interpellations and contradictions — which constitute the raw material on which class ideological practices operate."³⁰ It also "marks the forms of the relationship through which two processes — which remain distinct — obeying their own conditions of existence, are drawn together to form a complex unity."³¹

This process of disarticulation and rearticulation of ideological elements contradicts the reductionist proposition that all ideological elements have a necessary class-belonging. Instead, it posits that ideological elements with no necessary class belonging or connotation are articulated into class discourses and are conferred a class character by the articulating hegemonic principle which is class interest. This crucial articulating principle shapes their particular meaning within the discourse in accordance with the interests of a particular class or class fraction. It effectively explains why the meaning of ideological elements shifts and changes according to their articulation in different discourses. The constitution of ideologies by means of the disarticulation of elements from other, even opposing discourses, their articulation from the field of elements with no distinct class-belonging, and their rearticulation into new ideological discourses with class interest as crucial articulating principle is a continuing process. Gramsci uses the term "war of position" for the process of ideological struggle by which two fundamental classes appropriate non-class ideological elements into their respective class discourses.³²

The concept of ideological elements with no necessary class connotation is a corrective to reductionism in ideology which would assign a strict class-belonging to all ideological elements. Since ideological discourses are continually being constituted, these elements make up an area of contention between the opposing ideological systems. Nationalism, democracy, populism, as well as feminism, ethnicity, and

religion are examples of such elements which are articulated into different, even antagonistic, ideological discourses. A rich area is that of national-popular culture which contains symbols, folk traditions, and, in general, continuities that are an important part of a country's national identity. As super-structural elements, they are harnessed into the ideological struggle when they are articulated into class discourses.

While the articulating principle confers on them a class character, these elements are also affected by, as they affect in turn, the meaning of the other ideological elements in the ensemble, their particular combination likewise focusing their meaning. Thus, nationalism in one discourse may be articulated with fascism and militarism, while in another may be found with populism and democracy. The ideological ensemble of elements acquires a coherent unity through its articulating hegemonic principle.

It is quite clear, for instance, that democracy is a highly contested ideological element. On one hand, the counter-revolutionary discourse of imperialism appropriates democracy and sets it in diametric opposition to communism, while stirring up an anticommunist hysteria. On the other hand, democracy is a central element in the national democratic discourse and other progressive-revolutionary discourses. One solution to this paradox has been to identify a range of "democracies," such as liberal democracy, social democracy, and national democracy. In liberal democracy, for instance, the vague notion of "citizen" is the subject of a democracy which is a simple system of formal rights guaranteed to individuals by the judicial process to participate in decision-making through electoral and parliamentary mechanisms. But this is not sufficient to explain why democracy is invoked in antagonistic discourses, revolutionary and counterrevolutionary.

In fact, the issue of the articulation of democracy into ideological discourse, goes back to the period of the Second International. An important part of its class reductionism was that it viewed all ideological element as having a necessary class-belonging. Chantal Mouffe explains: "Since the

bourgeoisie had succeeded in assimilating popular and democratic ideology to its discourse, Kautskyism concluded that democracy was necessarily a bourgeois ideology. . . (and) all elements belonging to the discourse of the bourgeoisie had to be decisively rejected by the working class whose aim had to be to cultivate pure proletarian values and to guard against external contamination.”³³ This ideological position of the Second International effected to cut off this valuable popular element from its discourse and to set it loose for its full appropriation into bourgeois reactionary discourses. Marx, however, had considered democracy as “the terrain of a permanent revolution begun by the bourgeoisie but concluded by the proletariat.”³⁴ And according to Lenin, “to develop democracy to its logical conclusion, to find the forms for this development, to test them by practice and so forth — all this is one of the fundamental tasks of the struggle for social revolution.”³⁵ It has indeed been a task in the ideological struggle to disarticulate democracy from reactionary discourses by exposing the essential contradiction between the people’s interests and those of US monopoly capital, and rearticulate it firmly in the revolutionary working class ideology where it is defined in terms of the interests of the broad masses.

The same can be said of nationalism, another ideological element with no necessary class connotation. We note, for instance, the reticence of the Aquino regime with respect to nationalism which was a salient feature of the Marcos state ideology, at the same time that it is an important part of the national democratic discourse. Often a regime pays at least lip service to nationalism as an obligatory element of state ideology. Its lack of currency in the Aquino government may mean that Mrs. Aquino thinks that a nationalist line may not do her government much good vis-a-vis American investors and creditors, and the US government in general and/or she believes that, as a number of people do, nationalism as ideological element possesses little potency because of its “looseness” of meaning. Of course, we hardly need to be reminded of Hitler’s notorious use of nationalism

in his fascist ideology.

As an ideological element with no distinct class connotation, nationalism is articulated into different discourses, while its class connotation becomes conferred by the articulating hegemonic principle of class interest. Thus, in the Marcos state ideology, the meaning of nationalism was largely cultural, in terms of the national cultural heritage and traditions, in order to boost national pride in keeping with the grandiose official rhetoric of the New Society. Nationalism in the formulation of *Isang Bansa, Isang Diwa* was an ideological ploy to cover up gross social inequality and injustice and to unify the people under the dictatorship of a small ruling elite, facilitators of US monopoly capital. Such a meaning likewise serves to defuse and neutralize the revolutionary potential of nationalism in its antiimperialist connotations.

In the national democratic discourse, on the other hand, nationalism connotes anti-imperialism in the broad alliance of the people — the workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie, and national bourgeoisie — against the power bloc of US imperialism and its local agents in the big landlord/comprador elites. Likewise, nationalism identifies the national interest with the interest of the majority of Filipinos, the large mass of the population, so that to pursue the national interest — which is economic and political sovereignty, true democracy, freedom and justice for all is also to pursue the interests of the people as a whole.

At the same time, the articulating principle of the national democratic ideology, with its socialist perspective, is the interest of the working class, the proletariat, with the peasantry as its closest ally. National democrats from all classes recognize that the basic and original ground of revolutionary hegemony is the working class, in close alliance with the peasantry, and which, in becoming a hegemonic class, also takes up and espouses the interests of the allied classes, the national and petty bourgeoisie, particularly those interests which have to do with their struggle against exploitation and oppression, and which are also the interests

of the people as a whole. It is in the national democratic discourse that nationalism as an ideological element can realize its full revolutionary potential.

It is to be recalled that at the beginning of the Marcos New Society there was a furious attempt on the part of the state ideologists to appropriate ideological elements from the revolutionary discourse and to articulate these into the state ideology. Among such elements were "Serve the people," "democratic revolution," and even KKK. Today, the most glaring example is President Aquino's use of the term "people's war" for her US-backed counterrevolutionary campaign against the Filipino masses, with the implementation of the LIC at the grassroots level.

Related to the concept of ideological elements with no necessary class connotation is the concept of "interpellation", an Althusserian contribution, to the theory of ideology. As a practice producing subjects, ideology "interpellates" or "hails" and recruits individuals into subjects through a variety of "interpellations" which are roles and identities that one may "live" in society: as citizen, national, member of an ethnic group, of a family, an institution, sector, and of a class. Through these identities which define their place in the system, they are induced to "live" their exploitation and oppression in such a way that they do not experience or represent to themselves their position as, precisely, one in which they are exploited and oppressed.³⁶ Internalizing the dominant ideology, they imagine themselves to be subjects as "free agents" but they are also subjects in the sense of subordinates to the dominant class.

For a class to be hegemonic, it needs to articulate non-class and popular interpellations into its ideology. Beyond the basic class interpellations, it needs to interpellate "people" into its discourse. And in this connection, Ernesto Laclau points out the dual discourse of revolutionary politics which is based on two interrelated and dialectical contradictions: the "people versus power bloc" contradiction and the basic class contradiction of the class struggle.³⁷ This

distinction is particularly relevant to the Philippines where "people" refers to a spectrum of class alliances from the workers and peasants to the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie versus the "power bloc" of the big landlord/comprador elite that constitutes the ruling class and which continues to be the facilitator and agent of foreign monopoly capital. This dual discourse of politics is present in the national democratic discourse. While in the national democratic stage, the "people versus power bloc" contradiction is dominant, this cannot be separated from the basic class contradiction, which is the core of revolutionary ideology, at the risk of being transformed into liberal reformism.

The ideological struggle then does not consist in the clash of two distinct and closed ideological blocs with fixed and mutually exclusive elements and the replacement of one with the other *en toto*, but in the continuing process of disarticulation and rearticulation of ideological elements while combining these into a coherent unity through the articulating principle of class interest. For the exploited classes, this process is within the movement to create a counter-hegemony through mass propaganda and cultural revolution going hand in hand with the broad revolutionary effort to effect social change.

4. What is the role of ideology in hegemony or counter-hegemony?

Ideological hegemony as defined by Gramsci encompasses a broad field which includes "the whole range of values, attitudes, beliefs, cultural norms, legal precepts, etc." that to one degree or another permeates society and solidifies the class structure and "the multiple forms of domination that pass through it." Internalized as "common sense," hegemony elicits active consent. As Boggs in *The Two Revolutions* points out, ruling class hegemony "mystifies power relations, public issues, and historical events; it encourages fatalism and passivity toward political action; it justifies

various types of system-serving deprivation and sacrifice." Thus, the hegemony of the ruling class works to induce the oppressed classes to accept or "consent to" their exploitation as the natural condition of man.

When ideology has spread throughout an entire society, hegemony, in general, which is the "complete fusion of economic, political, intellectual, and moral objectives,"³⁸ becomes possible. Gramsci adds a moral and intellectual dimension to the leadership of the hegemonic class and puts emphasis on the subjective requirements of revolutionary change. Hegemony consists in the transformation of the ideological terrain of society by effecting a large shift of consensus, i.e. from the dominant ruling elite to the revolutionary forces, rather than in the mechanical imposition of a given set of beliefs on the people. Winning the general consensus of the population guarantees a condition of political stability upon the seizure of power.

The transformation of the ideological terrain involves the constitution of ideologies through the process of articulating a range of ideological elements with no necessary class connotation into a class discourse. This is done in different ways. In bourgeois discourse, it is the process of neutralizing the interests of other groups and preventing the development of their specific demands; in revolutionary discourse, it is promoting the development of their full radical potential. True hegemony is possible only when popular aspirations and interpellations have been successfully articulated and given a liberative meaning in the revolutionary discourse.

Intellectuals play an important role as articulators and disseminators of ideas and ideology. According to Gramsci, "all men are intellectuals but not all men have the function of intellectuals." He classifies intellectuals into two groups: "traditional, professional intellectuals, literary, scientific, etc., whose position in the interstices of society has a certain class aura about it but derives ultimately from past and present class relations and conceals an attachment to various historical class formations; organic intellectuals, the thinking and organizing element of a particular fundamental social

class.”³⁹ For the proletariat to be hegemonic, it must assimilate the traditional intellectuals at the same time that it develops organic intellectuals of the group itself linked tightly with the group.

The proletariat becomes hegemonic when it successfully articulates popular interpellations, aspirations, and interests into its ideological discourse, and when, in its economic and political practice, it goes beyond the parameters of its original class interests to sincerely attend to and take charge of the interests of the allied classes in a common cause, without, however, sacrificing its basic class interests. Should the proletariat fail to recognize the necessity to become hegemonic in this real sense which entails the raising of issues and the espousing of interests beyond its narrow sectoral interests and concerns, i.e., beyond purely economic demands such as securing better wages and better working conditions for its members, it becomes narrowly corporatist and, content with piecemeal reforms, will lose its revolutionary thrust and will be readily absorbed into the system.

Likewise, the proletariat must engage itself in the arena of popular-democratic struggle by directing spontaneous radicalizing currents among the masses and the petty bourgeoisie and articulating these into the revolutionary proletarian ideology and practice. Otherwise, the radicalized energies of these popular struggles may turn into reactionary populism or may be used and controlled by a fraction of the ruling class as mass base in its bid for power as in the case of fascism. From our recent experience, we observed how the spontaneism of “people’s power” outside the framework of revolutionary mass organizations was encouraged by the military and the new ruling elite so that these could be directed towards counterrevolutionary goals. Thus, the subsequent formation of vigilante groups was justified as “voluntary” people power organizations. The popularity of the leader and the existence and encouragement of a strong populist response, predominantly petty bourgeois and outside the revolutionary framework were conditions at the beginning of the Aquino government which indicated

a fascist potential immensely favorable to US interests.

The dominant classes through the State maintain their rule through hegemony or consensus and coercion or force through the repressive state apparatuses. The hegemony of the ruling class mainly takes the form of transformism which is the absorption and neutralization of the interests of the masses in such a way as to prevent these from constituting a radical challenge. Transformism may be achieved through such policies as reconciliation, amnesty, and the limited accommodation of oppositional elements in government and governmental institutions. But since the ruling bourgeoisie or big landlord/comprador elite is an exploiting class, the limits of its hegemony will eventually be reached as it will only go so far to accommodate the interests of the subordinate classes and will not sacrifice its own interests which are maintained by the exploitative system. When such a point is reached that the ruling elite can no longer neutralize the demands of the masses who have assumed an increasingly radical and antagonistic position, then the dominant class uses its other weapon which is force through the military, and here in the Philippines it is a military backed by US monopoly capital.

A hegemonic crisis occurs when the ruling class loses its moral and ideological credibility and its legitimacy to rule is put to question. It shrinks into its economic-corporate existence which sharply brings out its repressive-exploitative character. The hegemonic crisis coincides with a crisis of authority which is resolved by the dominant class through state violence and repression and by the oppressed classes through revolution which may be a protracted war.

5. What are some contemporary strategies in ideology?

With the growing strength of the national democratic forces as the strongest oppositional challenge to the ruling elite, there have been in the past five years since the assassination of Ninoy Aquino a number of strategies in ideology originating from the dominant class. These were designed

to draw away the unorganized and unaligned sectors of the middle class from possible alignment with the revolutionary forces and to wrest the leadership of the opposition from these and replace it with an "acceptable" reformist agenda. Thus, there was a rash of activity of funded groups mushrooming overnight to plan "alternative" programs, structures, proposals in all fields, such as ecology, science, education, etc. At first, these were construed to be alternatives to the structures of the Marcos dictatorship, but these soon became transformed into alternatives of the ruling elite to neutralize and defuse the radicalism of the national democratic program. In the so-called free market of alternatives, these sought to reduce the revolutionary proletarian viewpoint and program to one among many others open to cooptation into the system.

Recently, there has been an observable strategy of deideologization from certain quarters. The opening remarks of a conference on "A Filipino Agenda for the 21st Century," another elite alternative stressed the necessity to be "able to think beyond ideology and President Aquino." There was likewise a similar statement that appeared in the papers in connection with a public forum of the artist "not bound to any ideology." This strategy of "deideologization"⁴¹ is not new. It appeared in bourgeois ideology in the Sixties in writings such as those of Daniel Bell and Raymond Aron who called for the "end of ideology." It serves to downgrade Marxism and the revolutionary proletarian ideology by declaring all ideologies as veiled with illusion. What its proponents find negative in ideology in general is its relation to class interest. Corollary to this is their desire to "rescue" art from economic determination, no matter how indirect or highly mediated the relationship, and thus to endow and to "privilege" art, an area of human knowledge and practice, with absolute autonomy, at the same time that they deny to art its potency as a weapon in the class struggle. In general, deideologization is being resurrected to draw people away from the national democratic discourse and program with its socialist perspective, to neutralize intensifying contradictions

in society, or to accommodate more conveniently with the US-backed Aquino regime which has unleashed counter-revolutionary violence on the Filipino masses.

The early months of the Aquino regime were marked by a policy of attraction through official statements of "reconciliation". While the NDF saw the ceasefire talks as an opening which could lead to a common perception of the root causes of the national problems and consequently to a political settlement, President Aquino regarded them only as a formal political exercise that would culminate in the general acceptance of amnesty and the laying down of arms by the revolutionary forces. Not long after the collapse of the ceasefire and the small "democratic space" that went with it, the government launched a nationwide campaign to put up vigilante groups. The manipulation of religious symbols and pious public practices would continue to prop up the legitimacy of the Aquino government with its posture of moral rectitude.

With the freeing of top political prisoners upon her installation, President Aquino created expectations of at least a liberal democracy which would allow political pluralism and open the door to popular representation in government. But this did not materialize partly due to sustained US pressure since US strategic interests and access to resources would be threatened. With the declaration of Aquino's so-called people's war against the people themselves, it is a misrepresentation of reality to describe the present regime as liberal democratic, especially in view of the vigilante groups and local spy networks in accordance with the full implementation of the LIC, US "dirty wars" in the Third World.

Even the so-called centrism of the Aquino government is a US-ideological package complementing the Reagan doctrine which now seeks legitimation through regimes with a liberal facade. With its fast diminishing hegemony, the Aquino regime has resorted to state violence to eliminate the Left and the Right as its enemies, with the balance much heavier on the side of the Left. In this case, "centrism"

which disguises right conservative interests is not merely the political enhancement of the center but its representation as the sole and rightful possessor of political power which will either absorb or violently eliminate all opposition, thus firmly consolidating the new ruling elite and thereby guaranteeing US interests.

1. Karl Marx, *Selected Writings* (Oxford: 1977), pp. 388-89.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 176.
3. Maynard Solomon, ed., *Marxism and Art* (Sussex: 1970), p. 36.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
5. Marx, *op.cit.*, pp. 157-58.
6. Solomon, ed., *op.cit.*, p. 33.
7. Marx, *op.cit.*, pp. 388-89.
8. Stuart Hall, "The 'Political' and the 'Economic' in Marx's Class Theory in *An Introduction to Sociology* (London: 1980), pp. 25-36.
9. Marx, *op.cit.*, p. 69.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 236.
11. Solomon, ed., *op.cit.*, p. 30.
12. Quoted in Franz Jakubowski, *Ideology and Superstructure in Historical Materialism* (New York: 1976), p. 55.
13. Stuart Hall, *op.cit.*, p. 200.
14. Mao Zedong, *Selected Works* (Peking: 1967), p. 336.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Stuart Hall, *op.cit.*, p. 200.
17. Louis Althusser, *For Marx* (London: 1969), p. 11.
18. Stuart Hall, *op.cit.*, p. 201.
19. Althusser, *Reading Capital* (London: 1970), p. 319.
20. *Ibid.*
21. Norman Geras, "Althusser's Marxism" in *Western Marxism: A Critical Reader* (London: 1977), p. 251.
22. Stuart Hall, *op.cit.*, p. 235.
23. Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (New York: 1971), p. 145.
24. Chantal Mouffe, *Gramsci and Marxist Theory* (London: 1979), p. 189.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 171.
26. Georg Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness*. (Cambridge, 1971) p. 27.
27. Gareth Stedman Jones in *Western Marxism: A Critical Reader* (London: 1977), p. 50.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 57.

29. Mouffe, *op cit.*, p. 195.
30. Ernesto Laclau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory* (London: 1977), p. 161.
31. Stuart Hall, *op. cit.*, p. 230.
32. Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks* (New York: 1971), p. 238.
33. Mouffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 173-74.
34. Quoted in Mouffe, *op. cit.*, p. 180.
35. V. I. Lenin, *State and Revolution* (New York: 1932), p. 65.
36. Althusser, *op. cit.*, pp. 170-73.
37. Laclau, *op. cit.*, p. 167.
38. Quoted in Mouffe, *op. cit.*, p. 180.
39. Gramsci, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
41. *Dictionary of Philosophy*, ed. by I. Frolov (Moscow: 1967), p. 99.

MEDIA AND THOUGHT CONTROL: THE SUBJUGATED CONSCIOUSNESS

The fast-paced events that led to the downfall of the Marcos regime demonstrated in a most striking manner the role of the print and broadcast media in historical change. The ousted dictator Marcos fully exploited their possibilities as instruments of ideology.

The sorry condition of the media during the Marcos regime is for us so recent an experience that its bitter aftertaste continues to linger. Throughout the duration of the regime, the state manipulation of the print and broadcast media was not an occasional effort but a total and systematic operation, in fact, to break their spirit of freedom and to make them an adjunct of state power. In retrospect, it is amazing, indeed, shocking, how the dictatorial regime applied its full force to destroy the once proud Philippine press and media in order to perpetuate the widespread exploitation and plunder of the country's resources.

To ensure total control of the media, the Marcos regime embarked on a number of interrelated moves. With the declaration of martial law in 1972 it closed down the critical press,

seized the radio stations and TV channels, and subsequently put up newspapers under the ownership of family members and cronies. The ownership of the media secured, it then proceeded to create an elaborate network of ideological state apparatuses including the Office of Media Affairs, the University of Life, the Philippine News Agency, the Development Academy of the Philippines, the Ministry of Tourism, the Presidential Center for Strategic Studies, the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the Writers' Union of the Philippines, *Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilipinas*, and the government-owned Channel 4, not to speak of journalists rumored to be on the Malacañang payroll.

Given these apparatuses, and with key personnel strategically positioned in the media, repression and censorship became institutionalized. The manipulation of the news became the order of the day. The Malacañang press boys fed the news sifted and deodorized to the different crony newspapers. "Developmental journalism" was the euphemism for a manipulated press in which writers were enjoined or coerced to show the bright, touristy side and conceal the harsh reality of Philippine conditions. Nothing was spared from censorship: columns and articles by staff writers and contributors were submitted for censorship; even photographs, especially those for magazine covers had to be approved by the watchdogs of the State. There were guidelines for film and television as well as for the press. There were "talking tips" for talk shows, as in the late unlamented *Panuwagan* 86, where government apologists bullied the opposition with the arrogance of power. But onerous as these were, they were only the milder forms of coercion, compared to the slapping of multimillion lawsuits on journalists, the imprisonment, torture, and killing of many courageous writers in Manila and all over the country with hardly any hope of justice.

Yet, in the end, Marcos was trapped by his own devices. The elaborate structure he built around himself, while it maintained its coercive power, also turned into an insulating

chamber from which he governed via the television image. So that, indeed, with the unmasking of myths, his power had turned to empty clawing gestures and to mere illusion.

A significant aspect of the events that led to the overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship had to do with the dismantling of the state media apparatuses. An effective call of President Aquino was the boycott of the crony newspapers which saw a massive shifting of reader patronage towards the alternative press. During the four crucial days, the only gunbattles were those fought for the control of the TV channels which took a toll of several lives. Raids were also conducted against the Radio Veritas in Malolos in order to cripple its operation, while its substation in Fairview was also threatened by loyalist troops. There took place a furious media activity in which directions and counterdirections during the four days were transmitted mainly through the radio and TV: calls for defection, counterthreats, calls for support in various forms. And now that the dictatorship has been overthrown, it is necessary to reexamine and reassess the conditions of Philippine media.

Demystifying the Media

Stuart Hall defines the media as the socially, economically, technically organized apparatuses for the production of messages, signs arranged in "complex discourses" or "symbolic goods". The production of symbolic messages is made possible through language: a system of signs signifying meaning. These meanings and discourses, however, are motivated, influenced, or colored by the interests of social groups, sectors, and classes. Thus, the media are not mere static or mechanical structures or apparatuses of message production, but a charged field of dynamic activity in which different messages and meanings linked to contemporary issues continually intersect and release their energies in ideological conflicts corresponding to the struggles in the material base.

For this reason, it is necessary to make accessible to the large public of media consumers a knowledge of the internal workings of the media, to bring out the motivations continually operating upon them, their specific languages and their technologies by which they produce meaning. It is essential to raise the level of media literacy so that the mystifications that have so long surrounded media can be exposed.

The demystification of the media first of all involves a knowledge of the components of the communication process which Boyd-Barrett identifies as the following: 1) the shape of the communication vehicle involving a specific technology, 2) a set of industrial arrangements for the continuation of media production involving given structural relationships and financial facilities, 3) a body of values about the ideal practice, and 4) specific media contents. Often, we are aware only of the end product: the media contents, but ignore the other important factors involved in their production.

The television has its specific technology which creates a language or system of signs. Meaning is conveyed not only through images and sounds which have their semiotic or meaning-conveying potential in their composition, lighting, and shot angle, etc., but also in their editing, intercutting, and montage which determine the succession and interrelationship of the images.

Much of the effectivity of the TV medium as a conveyor of values and hence of ideological content lies in its immediate accessibility: with a flick of the dial, the images spring to life and all at once there is created the illusion that these images are within us, around us and that they unfold in space as the world outside our domestic confines. When we turn on the set, we let them into the privacy of our houses to intrude into our own space and time. Because the size of the TV screen is adapted to the dimensions of a domestic interior, unlike the large screen of the cinema, TV images easily become incorporated into our consciousness as they

flow in and out of our attention in a stream. At times, the images acquire a compelling character. We call to mind the image of Marcos seemingly speaking from a throne and creating a formidable presence as he rebuked and threatened the people with deprivations and punishments.

It is likewise the technology of the medium that enables it to focus and magnify objects and commodities: food, drink, jewelry, etc., and to exercise a language of visual seduction in their color and presentation along with their setting and social milieu, the people who use them, possess them, and endorse them. With these subliminal means, it is able to create values of the desirable and undesirable, suggest social goals and gear human efforts along consumerist motivations in an economy controlled by foreign monopoly capital and local bourgeois comprador interests. While the medium can magnify objects to emphasize their importance, it is also able to extend our sense of space and show within the confines of our homes huge outdoor crowds of thousands in rallies and political assemblies. This is why the Marcos media men were particularly concerned with crowd-size, as they resorted to the *hakot* system because large crowds have a propaganda effect on the nationwide TV coverage. Likewise, film clips of news around the world create a sense of simultaneity of events in different parts of the world, at the same time that they convey points of view emanating from the world centers of power.

The TV medium uses symbolism as its stock-in-trade particularly in advertisements and in short features, as symbols are visual short-cuts to meaning. These symbols instill in the audiences a desire for a wide array of items and leisure commodities and create the illusion that these are accessible to all and that their possession is the highest goal to which man should exert his entire efforts. The conveying of values also carries with it a subtle coercive power, moral, social or religious, so that it is possible for the TV medium to shape an individual's system of values and to disseminate through subliminal means an ideology of the elite that is advanced as good for all men for all time.

TV then is not neutral: it is never pure entertainment or objective reportage. Its news is shaped by the interests that control the industry. The cultural and entertainment programs transmit ruling class values in order to reproduce exploitative relations.

In the print media, the prevailing myth is that of "objectivity," "impartiality," and "balanced reporting." But these values of practice can only be relative and not absolute. At all times, interests operate in the press and determine which news to choose and which to ignore, which to emphasize and which to play down, which angles, aspects, or directions to project and which to reject. As a media scholar pointed out: "News is a structure, and newsmaking is a political activity." The recent polarization of the Philippine press into the crony and the alternative press earlier scornfully referred to by the cronies as the "mosquito press," only reflects the acute crisis of media credibility towards the end of the Marcos regime. In normal times, the "objectivity" of the press merely represents a "mode of centrality" (Boyd-Barrett's term) within a context which boundaries are circumscribed by the various interests with those of the ruling class predominating. At best, "objectivity" represents a liberal ideal of alternative and competing structures in the so-called "marketplace of ideas"; at worst, it is a myth to conceal the manipulation and distortion of the media by anti-people interests.

The Ideological Effects of the Media

Writing in the context of the First World, Stuart Hall enumerates the ideological effects of the media as: 1) masking and displacing, 2) fragmentation and separation, and 3) imposing an imaginary unity and coherence. These effects also hold true in our semifeudal and semicolonial society although the ways in which they are realized may differ. The media industry, through its programs, functions to conceal and repress the basic antagonisms of the system and project the illusion that "all is well." This is an effect

all too familiar to us as "developmental journalism" which went hand in hand with literal or figurative whitewashing and erratic beautification programs, as well as with the exploitation of tourist spots and the folk-picturesque while reports of military abuses and corruption emerged only through the fissures and hard-won spaces of the alternative press.

The second effect, that of fragmentation and separation serves to sectoralize the interests of classes and sectors. By this strategy, each class or sector attends to or watches over its particular interests and seeks to obtain gains specific to its needs. For instance, workers' trade unions may confine themselves to economic reformism, and progressive sectors may engage in short-term goals and lose their militant drive to change the inequitable system and thus be cut off from the mainstream of the people's struggle against the oligarchic power bloc. At the same time that the media industry fragments, it also imposes an illusory unity with the use of such ideological totalities as "the popular will," and, by a semblance of democracy, conceals the basic antagonisms and strategies by which the dominant classes project their interests as those of the entire society.

In the Philippine context, we may add two more ideological effects: that of conveying the domination of American imperialism as in the natural order of things, and that of effacing and absorbing our cultural identity and political sovereignty and thus weakening the people's drive to self-determination and independence.

The Present State of the Media

At present, the question of who controls the media is a critical issue. A decided gain has been the breaking of the Marcos media monopoly. But the problem is not yet solved. Government ownership of TV channels supervised by management committees will not necessarily reflect the interests of the broad masses but will most likely place the TV and

broadcast media in the hands of the urban elites. With the installation of the Aquino government, the press has to adjust to the new conditions and to assume a critical and truly democratic role. But for this to be possible, it is necessary to look into the ownership of the media. What policy will the new government take with respect to media ownership? Again, the prevention of monopolies and the distribution of ownership on a larger field do not by themselves solve the problem. It is a problem in which the freedom of the press is at stake. Veteran journalist Amando Doronila makes this incisive observation: "The restoration of oligarchical formations will give us a false picture of pluralism in the media, but in fact the pluralism is that between members of the ruling class. In pre-martial law years, we deceived ourselves in believing that we had a media operating in the best liberal democratic traditions of capitalism. In fact, what we had was a plurality of conservative ideas competing noisily to preserve the social order. So long as journalists discussed issues within the framework of the ideological values of that social order, they were permitted to enjoy the 'freedom of the press' in the interests of the elite." This time, such illusions of press freedom circumscribed by elite interests must be shed for the substance of a truly free press based on popular-democratic aspirations. Concrete measures can lie in legislations for the dispersal of equity in the media to forestall monopolies by interest groups and to ensure and expand the democratization of the media's financial base by a broad mass-based ownership including the workers, but with the people, and not a few individuals, in control.

The avowed removal of censorship and the sweeping away of the restrictive guidelines of the Marcos regime clear the way for the liberalization of the media. Yet while the parameters of freedom have widened — at least based on present indications — the media remain circumscribed by the framework of the old structures which the new regime has not dismantled. The struggle now is conducted on a higher level,

with a need for a wide range of sophisticated and flexible strategies.

Our energies now, on the part of writers, media persons, and the general public, must be directed towards testing the limits of the media, the press and broadcast media, to push them to the maximum extent that they will be allowed to accommodate the people's demands, and by so doing, to expose and challenge the limitations of the bourgeois interests that are at the core.

Testing the Limits of the Media

This strategy of testing the limits of the media primarily applies to two interrelated areas. The first is media imperialism which is a continuing phenomenon. The struggle here aims to break down US domination of our media.

We have to identify the forms of this domination:

1) The TV industry reflects its links with imperialist interests in the massive importation of TV programs and in the barrage of advertisements of products of multinational corporations. These links are structural and will only be broken by the dismantling of the semifeudal semicolonial structures which continue to prevail.

2) There is a continued dependence on a limited group of foreign news agencies with the orientation of advanced capitalist countries, such as the UPI, the AP, the Agence France Presse, and Reuters to the exclusion of other sources.

3) Imperialist agencies such as the CIA can, at any moment, conduct a smear campaign against the local progressive and nationalist forces, as in the orchestrated anti-people propaganda during the last electoral campaign in such conservative American journals as *Commentary* which ran the malicious, distorted, and widely-disseminated Ross H. Munro article. Syndicated political articles printed in local newspapers and magazines can also reflect this influence.

Media Imperialism

Through the different media venues, TV programs, feature films, press releases and articles, values favoring US interests and perpetuating the subjugation of our consciousness continue to be disseminated.

1) The cold war ideology has been considerably refurbished by the conservative Reagan administration. In a number of TV programs, the villains continue to come from socialist countries and the freedom fighters from the Third World are represented as "narrow-minded bigots," "conspirators," or "terrorists" who threaten the so-called Free World, while the heroes are invariably Americans smugly carrying out their mission "to make the world safe for democracy."

2) TV programs glorify an armaments culture which supports the weapons industry of the United States along with an aggressive militarism which suppresses the aspirations of Third World countries in Asia and Latin America to self-determination and true sovereignty. Numerous TV programs export capitalist violence born of greed in which crime syndicates shoot it out in the streets as in *Miami Vice*. Likewise, they trivialize crimes such as murder and mayhem for profit, seemingly make them accessible to the ordinary person and removed from any moral content. They render banal and neutral wars of imperialist aggression at the same time that they legitimize reactionary state violence and American intervention in the Third World. All in all, the armament culture in the media leads to a "fetishism of the weapon" and a glorification of militarism. We note how the members of the *A-Team* ruthlessly blast away with high-powered guns at the same time that their characters are projected with an off-beat cartoon-character appeal that win the children (and adult) audiences.

In the press media, we have noted a number of admiring references in a particular vein to Minister Enrile, one of which comes from Denis G. Gray: "Singing a prayer and shouldering an Uzi submachinegun, Juan Ponce Enrile

cut a dashing figure. Thousands cheered the brave defense minister as he threw the gauntlet before the superior forces of Ferdinand E. Marcos." Such lines from the foreign press are not purely expository nor informative but are calculated to work on popular sentiments by glamorizing the military and lending it an aura of heroism. This is but a transparent ploy on the part of the reactionaries to gain the people's assent to the army's counterinsurgency operations.

3) The media, especially television, also glorifies technology and removes it from the context of human values. Sometimes it is celebrated for its own sake as in expensive sci-fi interplanetary series with futuristic space module settings, the technological gadgetry made to appeal to both adult and children audiences. Sometimes, the machine becomes the protagonist of the series with man playing a poor second as in *Knight Rider*. But always, high technology is made to impress on Third World viewers the superpower status of the United States by virtue of its hi-tech weapons, machines, gadgets, and toys. This arrogance of power is even more strikingly demonstrated by the sheer economic capability to waste splendid products of technology recklessly and arbitrarily: expensive cars are wrecked before our eyes and reduced to junk in a matter of seconds before Third World audiences where millions of people lack the wherewithal for their next humble meal.

4) Doubtless, the media fosters the acquisitive consumer mentality, creates consumption patterns, and guides consumer habits along the interests of foreign monopoly capital. The mindless game shows tantalize the audiences of poor countries with the latest in First World consumer goods and with dollars counted by the hundreds for lucky winners of their affluent society. These displays of abundance can have injurious effects on our impoverished populations whose sense of reality can become warped by dreams of instant wealth. In TV entertainment, feature films and advertisements, foreign monopoly capital is the Midas touch that turns everything into a commodity: human relation-

ships, talent, achievement, leisure, culture, art, even man himself is reified. Desires are stimulated, new needs, including useless ones, are created. Indeed, the television as visual medium is the vehicle *par excellence* of commodity fetishism, a symptom of man's alienation from himself brought about by exploitative relations.

Even to the present, television and the press largely convey the values that perpetuate the subjugation of our consciousness and our continued dependence. These values which daily impinge on our consciousness threaten to absorb our cultural values as a people. If these former are not resisted, we may experience the gradual loss of identity and we become reduced to a passive open market for foreign goods and multinational products derived from our own resources.

An important aspect of media imperialism is the discourse of domination evolved by Western social scientists. First World imperialism has, since the Fifties, built up a knowledge-power vocabulary to perpetuate neocolonial links. A basic strategy is "problematization" in which areas are identified as problems, such as the "Philippine problem," "the insurgency problem," or in the US, "the Negro problem." When such an area is so identified, "remedies" are developed and applied to the problem, not to solve it but to isolate and maintain it as a problem area, similar to "nursing a cold or toothache." Much of the language of domination has evolved around the concepts of "development" and "modernization" in which, of course, Third World countries are expected to follow in the wake of the United States and all norms, economic, political, and cultural, are those of advanced capitalist societies.

The discourse of domination has found fertile ground in Third World poverty. Thus, there are concepts such as "the culture of poverty" with its local version of "slum as a way of life." The concepts serve to isolate the victims of poverty, mark them different from the rest and therefore aberrant types, and even render them folk-picturesque, thus perpetuating their condition. Another common strategy in this area is "blaming the victim" in which poverty is seen as an

inherent condition and therefore natural.

Technological language is part of this discourse. For technological terms serve to sanitize, dehumanize, neutralize, and remove moral implications. These are often terms such as "counterinsurgency operations," "salvaging," "human targets," "wasting," and "neutralizing," etc. These belong to imperialist discourse which dehumanizes the poor, the insurgents, and therefore legitimizes their oppression and destruction. These terms proliferate in the media as disseminated by Western ideological experts.

Up to now, the neocolonial structures remain. The bourgeois-comprador elite, agents of foreign monopoly capital, are as visible as ever. We have to recognize the hard fact that the overthrow of the Marcos regime by the Enrile-Ramos military faction in support of the new president, while it had the effect of overthrowing the dictatorship, was also calculated to preempt the fast-growing radicalization of the people, to win over people's power that had been expressed along antifascist and antiimperialist lines to the support of the so-called military saviors who will now have a freer hand in antipeople operations, and finally and more importantly, to secure a firmer base for American monopoly capital in the country. Before and during martial law, the opposition to the US-Marcos dictatorship was spearheaded by the progressive forces which went beyond the purely anti-Marcos line to antiimperialist demands. The overthrow of the dictatorship with the significant role of the military satisfied the large anti-Marcos clamor of the people, but, the military establishment cannot and will not go along with the people's antiimperialist aspirations and will, in fact, frustrate these with all the resources in its power.

This leads us then to the important strategy of testing the limits of the media by consistently raising our antiimperialist demands. American intervention does not only consist in direct or indirect political maneuvers, in military and economic aid, or in notorious "diplomatic solutions" with Habib as the world-enforcer, the larger part of it consists in media

statements, press releases and articles issued at critical moments to influence the public along certain lines. These may consist in smear campaigns against progressive nationalist leaders or in image-building campaigns to boost reactionary officials. As for TV programs, films, and advertisements that perpetuate our dependence, these can be exposed by vigilant criticism.

Social Inequity

The other area in which we shall test the limits of the media is in that of social justice and the redistribution of the country's wealth. The mass media have been entrenched in a social structure with built-in inequalities and exploitative relations. On one hand, they reflect the elitist tastes of the dominant classes, the big landlords and compradors, whose cultural preferences are brought forward as models for emulation. On the other hand, they disseminate a mass popular culture fashioned by these dominant classes for the masses to keep them in subjugation. They foster the escapist and the metaphysical, or the generally colonial and feudal culture. And here, of course, the ownership of the media again becomes a crucial issue, since ownership is tied to interests.

Elite ownership of the media fosters a consumer mentality in the viewing public. The highest values are consumer goods that become the goals of living. Advertisements create the illusion of a large middle class and of material prosperity as a general condition. Vicarious satisfactions are offered through the image, and the Cinderella myth of rags to riches remains one of the most durable mainstays of Filipino soap operas; prosperity and love are the rewards of martyr-heroines. The media propagates the myth that social inequalities can be overcome by individual effort and personal virtue, and social inequalities are simply explained by the *gulong ng palad* or wheel of fortune myth blinding the masses to the reality of injustice which is not a matter of individual misfortune but is rather built into the present system which

reproduces itself through the captive media.

Thus, the TV and the media in general are used by elite interest groups for the people's domination. More than any other vehicle, the TV at present is not only a boob tube but a powerful instrument of American imperialism in the guise of providing entertainment and objective reportage. Again, we must pose hard questions: How free is the Philippine press today? Whose interests do the media serve? Will they continue to function as opiates diffusing illusions and false promises, as image-makers romanticizing snap heroes, or will they function towards the liberation of all and the attainment of our aspirations towards a truly free, just, and human order?

SYNTHESIS: Before and Beyond February 1986, IDF, 1986.

SHOPPING FOR MODELS OF GOVERNMENT

On the parapet of a stone structure in the traditional Balinese style with a fearsome *kirtimukha* or demonmask intricately carved over the portal, Pres. Corazon Aquino stood smiling guilelessly beside the white-haired batik-clad Indonesia Pres. Suharto. The yellow and gold tones of their attire lent a congeniality to the occasion and the general atmosphere was one of Asian urbanity, warm but decorous. It was an occasion in which one readily invoked the "natural affinity of race and proximity." "A learning experience" was how Pres. Aquino summed up her ASEAN visit. Reports played up the optimistic mood: "a trip that was originally intended to be merely symbolic seemed to have achieved real value for all sides."

In Indonesia, their "frank and friendly talks" centered on "an exchange of experiences" on the subject of how to deal with insurgency. The position of the Indonesian government on the matter was categorical. The hosts aired a concern that "the Philippines might be giving too many

concessions to the communists." They were of the opinion that they were "more experienced in this respect and do not give way to their pressures," with the implication that Mrs. Aquino should learn from their hardline policy rather than seek to conduct negotiations with the insurgents.

What is the background of this unconditional position of the Indonesian government on insurgency? A review of the contemporary history of Indonesia will shed light on the present economic and political structures which Pres. Aquino observed during her visit. Our president, out shopping, not for luxuries as the former First Lady used to do, but for models of government, may perceive beneath the surface of the vaunted "economic miracles" the deep rifts, the tragedies, the nightmares that one would not have thought possible in the reality of history.

Indonesia suffered a grievous national crisis in 1965 in the series of events that led to the downfall of Sukarno and his replacement by Suharto who since then has held the reins of government. This was not an ordinary change of rulers for it was attended by a slaughter of enormous proportions. As philosopher Bertrand Russell wrote: "In four months, five times as many people died in Indonesia as in Vietnam in 12 years." Up to now, military officials in Indonesia still boast about how the government "pulverized" the communist movement after the aborted coup of October 1, 1965. Other favorite verbs are "smashed" and "wiped out," words which gloss over the fact that around 600,000 people, among them PKI (Indonesian Communist Party) members, Chinese merchants, Malay peasants, women and children were massacred.

Harold Ward Maynard in his book, *Comparison of Military Elite Perceptions in Indonesia and the Philippines*, gives the sequence of the events. On the morning of October 1, 1965, Lt. Col. Untung and four military colonels announced that "for the sake of the State, the *Panca Sila* (the national ideology formulated upon Indonesian independence by Sukarno), the Revolution, and the Armed Forces," a "cleaning-up" operation had been mounted on Jakarta against a

"Council of Generals" who were said to be planning a coup for October 5. During the night, six senior generals were kidnapped by PKI sympathizers and killed at Halim Air Base. In the document in which Lt. Col. Untung decreed the Cabinet dissolved and replaced by the Revolutionary Council, he stated that the September 30 Movement was "solely confined to the body of the Army. . . (though) assisted by armed troops outside the Army." This decree was countersigned by four deputy commanders of the September 30 Movement who were from different services.

At first, the inclination of the Army elite was to play down exactly who spearheaded the kidnapping and killing of the generals. The individuals plainly implicated in the Untung document were Army elements associated with the Palace Guard, the 45th Battalion (Central Java, Diponegoro Division), and the 530th Battalion (West Java, Siliwangi Division). Instead, the military emphasized the role played by the communist youth and the leftist Air Force personnel in the abduction and killing of the six generals.

General Suharto remained as the senior officer in Jakarta in a position to organize and conduct Army operations against the September 30 Movement. Meanwhile, the PKI newspaper *Harian Rakjat* published an editorial which supported the Movement as a patriotic effort to preempt an army coup, but labeled it "an internal Army affair." But given the historical opposition stance of the PKI, the Army elite immediately assumed that the coup was communist-inspired. Arrests began. The Army's two newspapers began a press campaign against the PKI. Meanwhile, Suharto and the Army increasingly resisted Sukarno's leadership (he failed to appear at the funeral for the fallen generals). The Army then gave free rein to students and the Muslims to crush the PKI and its sympathizers. According to Sarwo Eddy, the paratrooper commander, "In Solo, we gathered together the youth, the nationalist groups, the religious Moslem organizations. We gave them two to three days training, then sent them out to kill the communists."

A veritable slaughter ensued. Muslim groups responding

to the call of the *ulamas*, who were largely conservative landlords as well as community leaders, went on a holy war, which soon turned into a free-for-all to score old grudges. From October to December 1965, from 700,000 to 1,000,000 were killed, but the number is probably around 600,000, which is the figure cited by senior officers in Indonesian military intelligence.

In June 1966, the *Statement of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia* revoked Sukarno's Presidency-for-Life and changed his appellation as "Great Leader of the Revolution" to a mere honorary title without legal authority. With this accomplished, Suharto transferred responsibility for government stability to the Armed Forces and called on all military men to support his new authority for the sake of Guided Democracy. The military then took over in all areas of civilian life, while it still employed, to give an appearance of continuity, the original revolutionary discourse which created the Army in the anti-Japanese War in 1945: "To devote themselves in every field to fulfill 'the message of the People's Suffering' and for the sake of the Revolution's resistance."

Suharto was careful to legitimize his position by obtaining the signature of Sukarno on documents giving him full authority to establish political stability. He also emphasized that the military's expansion to traditionally non-military areas was accomplished legally. Thus, for the 1971 elections, the second held since 1955, the Army organized a political front called GOLKAR, a broad-based party which functioned as the instrument of the Army's elite. To ensure GOLKAR's success in the elections, around two million government employees were mobilized for the campaign.

But behind all these events, however, was the insidious intervention of the United States in Indonesia affairs. The appalling massacre of 1965 followed by the military takeover was hailed by *Time* (15 July 1966) as "the West's best news for years in Asia." In 1967, Nixon described Indonesia as "the greatest prize in Southeast Asia."

Earlier, American interests had been thwarted by the flamboyant and personalistic Sukarno who exhorted the people to unity within the NASAKOM (nationalism, religion, communism) ideological framework and rallied against the *necolim* (neo-colonialists). In his National Day speech on August 8, 1965, Sukarno announced the withdrawal of Indonesia from the IMF and the World Bank. Cheryl Payer in 'International Monetary Fund and Indonesia Debt Slavery' interpreted this to mean "a socialist austerity program tailored to the necessity of conserving foreign exchange and preserving the nation's political independence, by cutting imports to a minimum, stressing domestic investment and home production of import substitutes, and accepting only those foreign credits which did not prejudice national control of the economy." Although there was reason to doubt, that he could realize such a difficult program, it caused alarm inside and outside the country. Sukarno himself, according to Michael Leifer, "drew on traditional cosmology and concepts to underpin his position and practised a highly emotional and romantic style of oratory which evoked a popular response," but "his romantic zeal, however, did not carry over to any genuine social or economic radicalism." It was during his regime that the PKI grew into the largest communist party in the non-socialist world. Not an opposition party, it maintained close relations with Sukarno and exercised considerable influence at State and government levels, although it later on depended increasingly on him for support.

Instead of Sukarno, the United States favored Sumitro, Minister of Trade and Industry and later Minister of Finance, and even more significantly, from 1951, Dean of the Faculty of Economics at the University of Jakarta. He always made it clear that his economic policy included "free access" to Indonesian resources and "sufficient" incentives for foreign corporate investment. Thus, David Ransom writes in "Berkeley Mafia and the Indonesian Massacre" that when Sukarno started nationalizing Dutch holdings in 1957, Sumitro joined the Outer Islands Rebellion in Sumatra and Celebes with

the Masjumi Party of Indonesia's commercial and land-owning Muslims and the dissident army commanders in an unsuccessful uprising which, Ransom says, "was supported briefly by the CIA."

An interesting footnote to this is that the Philippines, during the time of Pres. Garcia, was involved in a clandestine operation in this same Indonesian uprising. In Nick Joaquin's biographical account of *The Aquinos of Tarlac* (a history completed in 1972 but published only recently), it is recounted that this group of Indonesian colonels "all anti-Sukarno because Sukarno had become Red-leaning" had earlier come to train in the Philippines preparatory to their rebellion. And where else did they have their training camp but in Hacienda Luisita of the Cojuangcos in Tarlac! These arrangements were made upon Pres. Garcia's special request to Ninoy Aquino, with pressure from the Americans. When the colonels went back to Indonesia to begin the anti-Sukarno offensive, Ninoy was sent by Garcia to Indonesia as one of a three-man team of Filipino "guerrillas" (the two others were Philippine Army radio technicians). During the revolt, the Americans, using Taiwan and Clark Field as base, were dropping brand-new machine guns and ammunition for the dissident colonels. It was a top secret operation which not even the Philippine consulate in Menado knew about. When Ninoy saw that the rebellion was going to fail because of quarreling among the generals, he asked Garcia to pull out of it but the latter refused saying that he had a commitment to SEATO and to Dulles since the Russians had just been given an island off Jakarta for a naval base and thus it was to their interest that Sukarno be toppled from power.

When the Outer Islands Rebellion failed, Sumitro and the Americans continued to keep an eye on developments and to operate through the educational system. Earlier in 1954, Ford put together an MIT team, through the Center for International Studies, purportedly to discover the "cause of economic stagnation in Indonesia." Sumitro with his students

at the Faculty of Economics maintained close relations with their American mentors and attended the CIA-funded annual seminar run each summer by Kissinger, then Nixon's top foreign policy strategist. Also, in the mid-Fifties, professors from Berkeley converted the Faculty of Economics in Jakarta into an American-style School of Economics over the objections of Sukarno. The aim of the project was simply stated by John Howard: "Ford felt it was training the groups who would be leading the country when Sukarno got out." Peter Dale Scott asserted: "American policymakers knew in advance about planning for the military takeover, facilitated it, took credit for it when it occurred and even publicly exhorted the military to displace Sukarno in semi-official US publications."

The next step was to create an alliance between Sumitro's Ford-scholar proteges and the Indonesian Army. This was accomplished through the SESKOAD (Army Staff and Command School), the Indonesian Army nerve center in Bandung. It was arranged that the Faculty teach the "economic aspects of defense" and the future political problems of Indonesia. This same Faculty, in collaboration with the Army, created the KAMI, the student organization the leadership of which consisted of American Field Service scholars and students from the Bandung Institute of Technology which was under a ten-year program of the University of Kentucky.

But even when Sukarno declared martial law at the time of the Outer Islands Rebellion, the Army seized this as an opportunity to take over the provincial governments and deprive the PKI of its victories in the 1957 local elections, at the same time that the Army increased the number of ministries under its control. In fact, this maneuvering was called a "*creeping coup d'etat*." The generals also assumed directorship of the Dutch holdings that the PKI had seized for the people and soon enough, they also controlled the oil and tin industries, along with the big state-owned export-import companies. Thus, when the events of October 1965 came about, the Army was well-positioned in the government

and a large part of the studentry was controlled by the military. To prepare them, student paramilitary training was intensified in the months preceding the coup and student leaders were heard to boast of their organizational contacts with the extremist Muslim youth groups in the villages. These two groups spearheaded the massacre when the Navy Chief told the student leaders to "sweep" in one of the most shocking historical events in which the studentry was used by the military in the massive slaughter of the PKI, sympathizers, peasants, hundreds and thousands of people in the interest of the American gods.

There were other interrelated factors that came into play in the events of 1965. One was the racial element: a great number of those killed belonged to the Chinese population of Indonesia, who, because of their suspected pro-Peking sympathies, bore the brunt of the persecution, at the same time that it provided an opportunity for Malay resentment to vent itself against the entrepreneurially skilled Chinese. Thus, all of the Chinese shops in a number of towns were destroyed and their owners summarily executed. Another was the religious element: the Muslim *ulamas*, conservative landlords, called for *jihād* or holy war against the *kafirs* or infidels, and since it was *haram* (strictly forbidden) for Muslims to bury infidels, the bodies were left to rot in the fields and clog the waterways. There was also an underlying strain of folk fatalism and submission to destiny, as well as a dependence on oracles.

When it was over, and the new regime consolidated the interests of American monopoly capital, self-congratulatory remarks came out into the open. Thus, Gus Papanek, chief of the Harvard Development Advisory Services, crowed: "We couldn't have drawn up a more ideal scenario than what happened. All of these people simply moved into the government and took over the management of economic affairs and then they asked us to continue working with them." Foreign investors rushed in to exploit the country's vast resources: copper, nickel, bauxite, tin, caolin; likewise, the huge tropical forests, and from the sea, shrimp, tuna, and

pearls — and, of course, oil, the ultimate prize. An added bonus was the country's cheap labor. As a California electronic manufacturer in Jakarta remarked with satisfaction: "Indonesia today has the world's largest untapped pool of capable assembly labor at a modest cost" — which, at that time, meant ten cents a day. And as if this were not enough, Ford proceeded to sponsor a new Berkeley project aimed "in developing human resources for the handling of negotiations with foreign investors in Indonesia."

In his study of political parties in Indonesia, *Nationalism in Search of Ideology*, J. Eliseo Rocamora observed that at first, modern Muslim political groups, liberal journalists, students and intellectuals were given a stake in Suharto's New Order, "but with the consolidation of military power, the remaining political parties and organizations were emasculated through a variety of techniques ranging from bribery, manipulation of party congresses, the elimination of party influence in the bureaucracy and labor unions and other organizations. Even the Muslim political groups that played a crucial role in the anti-PKI and anti-Sukarno struggle have not escaped the relentless efforts of the Suharto regime to destroy all organizations with any degree of popular support. Instead, all these were absorbed into the army-controlled GOLKAR and the only channels of participation are so tightly controlled that they have lost all effectiveness."

Harold Crouch, cited in Randall and Theobald's 1985 study of *Political Change and Underdevelopment* gives a concise summary of contemporary Indonesian politics, which, since the coup of 1965, he conceives "in terms of a series of networks both within and outside the military, most of which radiate in one way or another from the person of General Suharto. Control over a vast patronage machine has been the crucial factor which has enabled Suharto to win and maintain the support of the armed forces. Under the General's 'Guided Democracy' army officers, along with most public officials, have used their positions to further their own interests. In order to reward supporters and, more impor-

tant, coopt potential dissidents, Suharto has appointed military officers to civilian posts which give them access to state funds. These funds have been used to start private business and, in addition, army officers have been able to use their influence in the government administration to secure for themselves, their relatives and friends, licenses, contracts, credits, and other resources." But Crouch makes it clear that "the arteries of patronage do not circulate throughout Indonesian society, only within the country's dominant group . . . For Indonesia's masses, however, political participation is minimal and that which exists is carefully orchestrated from above. . . All forms of opposition to the Suharto regime have been met with successive waves of repression inaugurated, in the wake of the 1965 coup, by the decimation of the Indonesian Communist Party in a pogrom which claimed probably half a million lives. By means of such grisly examples, the regime has striven to depoliticize the masses, that is, to render them politically passive. Despite such tactics the Suharto government is facing increasingly popular disaffection especially from more mobilized sectors of the population such as students, professionals, petty bourgeois elements in the process of being squeezed by foreign capital, and the urban poor."

Modern Singapore, the other ASEAN country visited by Pres. Aquino, was the colonial creation of Sir Stamford Raffles, governor of Sumatra for the East India Company in 1819, who even then envisioned it as a "free emporium" open to traders of all nations. The British East India Company incorporated Penang, Malacca and Singapore as the Straits Settlements in 1826 and later made them a British Crown Colony. In 1882, Sarawak, Sabah, and Brunei became British Protectorates. The Federated Malay States came into being in 1895 embodying Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan, and Pahang. British sovereignty over Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan, and Trengganu was transferred from Thailand in 1909. These four states and Johore were called the Unfederated Malay States. A series of treaties induced all of the Malay states to accept British advisers.

After the Japanese occupation of Malaya from 1942 to 1945, the British established the Federation of Malaya which became independent in 1957. Singapore, Sabah, and Sarawak joined the Federation to form the nation of Malaysia in 1963. The Federation, however, proved to be highly unstable and volatile because of its multiracial character. The Chinese-dominated government of Singapore chafed under the Malay leaders of the Federation. Separation seemed to be the only solution to a situation of racial antipathy which from time to time erupted in communal violence. Thus Lee Kuan Yew founded his own independent government in 1965.

Internal tensions in Malaysia and Singapore are largely due to their multiracial populations consisting of Malay, Chinese, and Indians. This multiraciality has a history which goes back to the 19th century when the Chinese migrated downwards to the Malay Archipelago in large numbers because of congestion in the southeast coast. While some settled in the commercial centers of Bangkok and Jakarta as traders, even larger numbers of Chinese, along with Indians and Sri Lankans, were recruited as indentured laborers in the British-owned rubber plantations and tin mines of Malaysia, while a number went to work as coolies on the docks of Singapore and Penang. In time, the migrant Chinese improved their economic situation through entrepreneurial activity and evolved the distinct culture of the Straits Chinese, the Babas and the Nonyas. The Indians, for their part, pursued a colonial education *par excellence* which placed emphasis on English language proficiency and neglected science, and which prepared them to work as clerks and functionaries in the British colonial bureaucracy. The Malays remained largely peasants and fishermen. The British colonial masters themselves used divide-and-rule tactics to keep the groups separate. Moreover, the different traditional religions of these racial communities, Islam, Hinduism, and Taoism or Buddhism did not favor intermarriage and kept them on separate diets so that up to now, the Chinese, Indians, and Malays go to their respective restaurants which guarantee that

the food is prepared according to religious specifications.

When Malaya and Borneo fell to the Japanese in the Second World War, it was Malaya's Chinese-led communist guerrillas which spearheaded anti-Japanese resistance. After the war, they turned against the British troops and colonial planters. From 1948 to 1960, Malaya was placed under emergency rule by the British during which the guerrillas were decimated. The failure of the movement was largely due to the fact that the Malays saw in the Chinese-led uprising a threat to their dominant position in the country. Thus, the Malay population chose to side with the colonial government against the guerrillas. As in Indonesia, the racial element became a significant factor to reckon with.

Thus, integration has been more political, in terms of the recognition of one government, rather than national, in terms of a commonly shared identity. Political parties are run along racial lines: UMNO, United Malays National Organization; MCA, Malaysian Chinese Association; MIC, Malaysian Indian Congress, which together form the National Front or *Barisan Nasional* with UMNO as its nucleus.

In social life, as a whole, religious issues also crop up especially with the growth of Muslim fundamentalism in the region. There is, for instance, the Muslim duty to observe strictly the rules of *haram* (prohibitions) and *halal* (commendations). While strictly speaking these injunctions only apply to the Muslims, they cannot help but affect the rest of the population. For instance, there was the problem as to whether to allow Muslim waiters and stewards to serve alcoholic drinks since it was *haram* for them to touch liquor.

In May 1969, racial tensions erupted into bloody riots in Kuala Lumpur, leading to the suspension of the Constitution. The riots which claimed hundreds of lives occurred on the eve of the local elections when the Chinese held a funeral procession for a youth, a member of the Labor Party, who was shot by a police detective while he was posting a call to boycott the elections. The Chinese suffered the most casualties, among them housewives and late promenaders when the terror struck. Once again the scenario was fa-

miliar: Tengku Abdul Rahman, according to John Slimming's book-length account, laid the blame for the riots squarely on the communists and the opposition parties and asserted that communist funds from Singapore helped finance the election campaigns. He likewise accused foreign correspondents of giving a "disgusting display of irresponsible reporting." For this cursory treatment of the problem, Slimming wrote in 1969: "No lessons have been learned and the real causes of the May riots in Kuala Lumpur have not been considered. The major problems are still being ignored."

In the period after the riots which sharply underscored the economic disparity between the Malays and the Chinese communities, the Malaysian government developed the New Economic Policy which aimed "to restructure society to reduce identification of race with economic function and geographical location, to eradicate poverty regardless of race, and to maintain national security." The main thrust was to be the improvement of the economic position of the ethnic Malays and other indigenous people, collectively called *bumiputras* or "sons of the soil".

Unlike Malaysia, Singapore is predominantly Chinese, but it continued to have internal tensions since its independence in 1965 as it experienced the increasingly authoritarian rule of Lee Kuan Yew. A scenario in 1971 had Lee claiming that the communists were stirring up conflict between the Chinese and the Malays. This provided justification for restricting the freedom of the press and arresting a number of journalists. This move was taken in the year just before the elections in which Lee's People's Action Party won all seats in Parliament.

Singapore projects the image of a disciplined society. Lee Kuan Yew's edict on long hair, trivial possibly but nonetheless telling, as it was made visual in the poster showing a hippie accompanied by the legend "those with long hair will be served last" points to the underlying authoritarianism. Last year, a new law was rushed through Parliament which

increased penalties for an MP deemed to have abused parliamentary privileges. Even more than the fine is the new measure which allows Parliament to suspend an offending MP's immunity from civil proceedings for statements made in the House. This is but one of the several stringent measures introduced by the government in recent months which, as MP Jeyaretnam was heard to say, "was meant to silence the criticism of the government because that criticism was beginning to hurt."

Singapore exudes an air of material prosperity based on the money ethic. In the book, *Impressions of Singapore* by Geoffrey Dutton, a telling portrait is drawn of a prosperous Singaporean: "The self-made man is happy with his Mercedes and his handmade furniture, and no one else seems to wish him anything but the best of luck. He will take you happily to the big new shopping center where he has four sections, \$1.5 million Singapore worth, for his shops, and will show you every gadget, each of which he knows by name. He came from Canton 32 years ago with 100 pounds and his tough little face crinkles around his flat nose with the memory of all the hard work and the joy of success. He has a lovely wife, but one of the children is a problem, idle, does not want to work. He shows you into his house and tells you immediately that it is 7,000 square meters. He has all the Western drinks in his cocktail cabinet and mixes them with alarming generosity, but drinks only tea himself. The rosewood furniture is all new, the wood is from Thailand and has been made by craftsmen in Singapore. He was in Europe in January and will be in Australia in July." There are, however, a few vexations in this Arcadia of the Good Life. Dutton tells of a university lecturer who wishes that her students would answer back. "When she asks them questions about basic principles, they say, 'Please, what do you think?'" She says that students who go overseas do poorly in the humanities. "At school and university, they have been trained as technocrats, and they simply do not know how to think." According to an architect, architecture students go to the university merely "to learn the tricks."

It is also where Pres. Aquino toured the 100% foreign-owned Sundstrand Pacific aircraft parts factory. Its manager, Gray Forbes, warmly lauded Singapore's highly favorable climate for foreign investment: "skilled and cheap labor, stability, and accessible transport." It is taken as a matter of pride that there has been only one strike since 1978—which is what Forbes probably means by "excellent labor relations." But behind this is, according to Peter Limqueco writing in the May 1985 issue of *Economic and Industrial Democracy Journal*, "the complete emasculation of trade unionism, strikes and stoppages are prohibited; trade unions are now an appendage of the government; collective bargaining is a joke." This is not surprising in the light of the pronouncements of C.V. Devan Nair, president of the Singapore National Trade Union Congress who, as early as 1956, decided that "the real battle for Singapore was not going to be fought against the British but against the communists who wanted to dominate an independent Singapore." This way of thinking is bolstered by an ideology which richly and expansively invokes religion and the Platonic verities, as Devan Nair's opening remarks in an essay on trade unions exemplify: "If at all there are seminal values, they belong not to the realm of politics, economics and sociology. They belong, rather, to the non-mundane spheres covered by the great spiritual mentors of mankind, figures like Christ and Buddha, who speak not of relative values, but of fundamental and universally applicable values of goodness, beauty, truthfulness, and selflessness."

Pres. Aquino's visit to Indonesia and Singapore seems to have given her a new confidence in government in its economic and political spheres as gathered from her statements: "It is becoming very clear to me that we have to make it very attractive to foreign investors to come in, without, of course, prejudicing our own interests." Or, "All that is needed is boosting the nation's economy to the same level as Indonesia and Singapore." There was also noted a clear predisposition to take these two ASEAN countries as models. When her hosts were said to have told her, "Don't worry

about having so many problems. When we were new leaders of our country, we too had many problems and we could not solve them in just six months, don't worry you're on the right track," Cory heaved a sigh of relief: "I am doing the right thing." But what, indeed, is "the right thing"?

Indeed, how far will Pres. Aquino identify herself with them? How well will she implement the "lessons" she learned from her trip? Given our long and rich nationalist tradition, and love for freedom, be it freedom of the press, freedom of thought, and the very simple freedom to be ourselves, we should have enough wisdom and courage to chart our own future according to our best lights.

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The Covert Presence

by Alice G. Guillermo

"National identity, a concept allied to nationalism, is also often subject to ideological distortion. For one, it does not consist in a static enumeration of qualities on the social, moral, and aesthetic planes which are purported to constitute the Filipino identity. Such a concept would only reify the Filipino character to an ahistorical and idealist essence. While the existence of persistent traits is recognized, national identity, however, must be viewed in perspective as developing in a dynamic and dialectical relationship to the historical process. Its definition, therefore, cannot be pegged to a particular period, such as the indigenous precolonial period or the 19th century Propaganda and Revolution."

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"It thus becomes the task of the reader and student in history and literature, in a symptomatic reading, to mark the fissures, the discontinuities of the work, not however, to smooth the contradictions, but to lay them bare so as to expose their ideological underpinnings. In history, where the silences are pregnant with suppressed energies, it is for the student to give these silences a voice and to initiate their engagement in a dialectical exchange with the text, for only by doing so can we be free from the tyranny of the pharaonic texts and arrive at the truth."

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